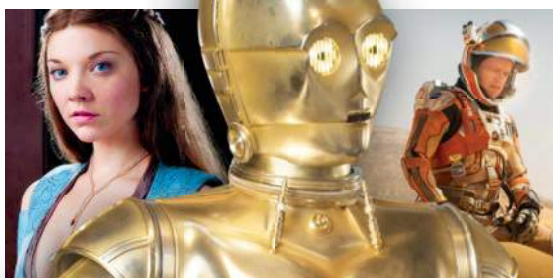


NEW

SciFiNow^{ANNUAL}

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**STAR
WARS**
FORCE AWAKENS
INTERVIEWS
INSIDE

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AGENT CARTER • HUMANS • THE MARTIAN • BIRDMAN • HANNIBAL • GOTHAM • ARROW • THE FLASH • DAREDEVIL

WELCOME TO

SciFiNow^{ANNUAL}

The Force is awakening.

It is a given that sci-fi causes a stir no matter what its format. But nothing quite makes as big a splash as *Star Wars*. But the world of Jedi and X-Wings is important to everybody. When presale started, websites were crashed and records were broken as fans bought tickets for the year's most anticipated film. But *Star Wars* isn't the only hot ticket of the year, *Jurassic World* broke records, making history for the biggest opening weekend. *Mad Max* returned to become the surprise hit of the year, therefore proving that making your fans wait doesn't always result in the *Star Wars* prequels.

It's also been a big year for TV, with *The Flash* running onto our screens to become The CW's most watched show, *Arrow* brought grit and seriousness to our heroes and *Game Of Thrones* continued to dominate the field.

We also take a look back at a year in Time Warp, visiting Neverland, Twin Peaks and Westworld. We even become a part of International Rescue. Enjoy the book!



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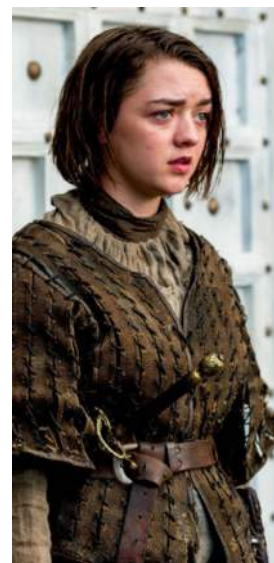
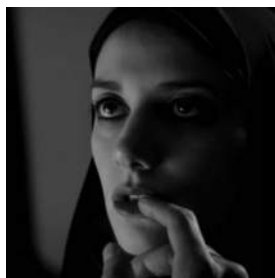
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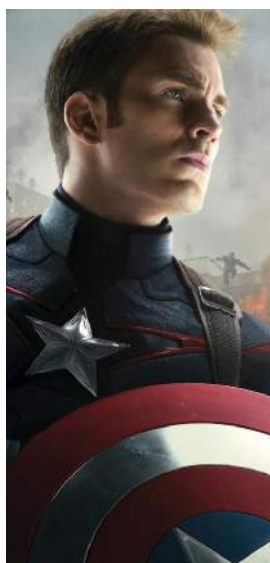
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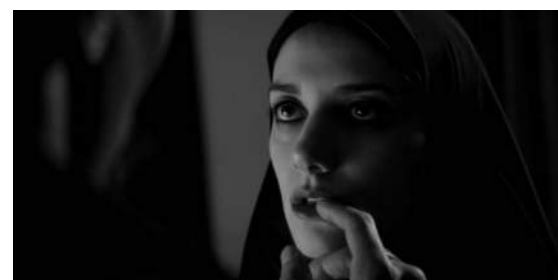




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A NEW HOPE DAWNS

**THE NEW
HEROES OF
STAR WARS
TELL US WHY
THE FORCE
AWAKENS IS
THE SEQUEL
WE DESERVE**

WORDS JONATHAN HATFULL

THERE HAS BEEN AN AWAKENING. *Star Wars* is back, and nothing can dampen our enthusiasm for it. The last attempt at bringing the saga back to the big screen may not have had the desired impact, but this time, we're confident that things will be different. Here we are, on the verge of another trip to that galaxy far, far away, and we've never been more excited. Everything we've learned about *The Force Awakens* has felt promising. From the return of classic characters and the emphasis on practical effects to the casting of the new heroes and villains and the reveal of BB8, it's all felt... right. When we sit down with the series' new stars, it's exhilarating to see how that excitement is shared.

"I was like, 'Shiiiiit!'" laughs Daisy Ridley, remembering the first time she read the whole script. "I really had no idea how important the role was."

Ridley's scavenger Rey is one of the new leads in the saga, coming across John Boyega's Finn and kick-starting this new adventure as they are pursued across the galaxy by the sinister First Order agents Kylo Ren (Adam Driver)

and Captain Phasma (Gwendoline Christie), while Supreme Leader Snoke (Andy Serkis) and General Hux (Domhnall Gleeson) lurk in the shadows. Along the way they comes across Han Solo (Harrison Ford) and Chewbacca (Peter Mayhew), and will presumably link up with Leia (Carrie Fisher) and the Resistance, who include among their number dashing X-Wing pilot Poe Dameron (Oscar Isaac). For his part, Boyega tells us that he broke into tears when he finally got his hands on the finished screenplay.

"What made me cry specifically was my involvement," he explains. "It's not anything to do with the story; it's just seeing your character's name consistently coming up in a script for a film that is *Star Wars*! Because for me, I would expect [to read the] first two pages, then your character's name's not coming up as much. But it was good to see that Finn was a consistent character through this story and plays a vital and important role. And that just made me go, 'Ohoho, yes!'"

Game Of Thrones star Christie hasn't been short on incredible genre roles lately, but she's positively giddy about

the prospect of playing Captain Phasma, the formidable-looking chrome-armoured First Order Stormtrooper captain. "She is *Star Wars*' first female villain," she grins. "Even now, when those lines come out of my mouth I can't quite believe it! She is captain of the Stormtroopers. She is part of the dark side. She has a blaster! Playing a villain in *Star Wars* was very exciting!"

Pushing for specifics results in knowing smiles and zipped lips, which is hardly surprising. Not only is this the return of one of the biggest film franchises of all time; it's coming from JJ Abrams, whose ability to withhold information has become the stuff of legend. So keeping schtum is something that the cast has adjusted to. "It's not difficult at all," laughs Boyega. "Not for me. The one thing about coming onto a project like this is vision, and I believe in JJ's vision. I genuinely believe that the way this guy is going about the decisions that he's making are 100 per cent correct, and because I believe in the vision, if someone asks me, 'Are you a Jedi? Do you control things? Are you Mace Windu's son?' I can easily say, 'Just wait until the film comes out!'" Indeed,

STAR WARS

STAR THE FORCE AWAKENS WARS

Christie rebuffs a question about how long it took to get into her Stormtrooper outfit with a laugh. "I'm not even going to give you specifics; it would ruin it!"

Still, we get a few snippets of gold-dust details as Boyega and Ridley enthuse about their characters. "[Rey] begins the film alone. She is a scavenger on Jakku [the desert planet seen in the trailers], and she meets Finn and they go on this adventure," she teases. "Would I compare her to Padmé and Leia? No, because they were born into privilege, and Rey certainly is not. And they have had a life before the film, but [this] really is the beginning of Rey's story."

"I like that she's open to the people she comes across," she continues. "She doesn't purposefully go into an adventure; she's drawn into it. She's so open to things that are going on, even though there are doubts holding her back. I like that for me as a normal girl from London, I can see myself in that. You can be strong at times, and then totally vulnerable and think, 'I can't do this; this is not for me,' and then be angry when things go wrong, and sad when things are sad. So I like that all of those things are represented in her."

Boyega is just as enthused about Finn, who has been the subject of fevered online speculation thanks to his sporting both a Stormtrooper costume and a lightsaber. "I think Finn is frigging cool, that's what I think!" he tells us. "Finn is at a very interesting point in his life... I think Finn sits [with the great *Star Wars* characters] comfortably. My thing about big space operas or movies is that we have to go through this portal of imagination if we want a character in the movie that we can relate to. We have the characters that are a part of the magic. For some reason they always know what to do, like Batman, they're just always on it. But then we have the characters that are like, 'Hmm, I'm not sure about this situation!' I love characters like that."

These characters are the reward for a punishing audition process that went on for months and months, which Boyega describes as "*The X-Factor* and *The Voice* all put in one. And rightfully so," he continues, "If I bought a company for \$4 billion, I'd make sure those actors are on point!"

"I thought my first three auditions were so bad," remembers Ridley. "I really thought I'd screwed up, and burst into tears every time I left, so on the final one I thought, 'Great,' went home and ate a

packet of biscuits. I was like, 'I'm done, I'm done, I've given it my all.'"

Even after finally being cast, they could only tell their nearest and dearest. "[When I heard], my mum and sister were in their dressing gowns, and they were like, 'Oh! Okay!' My dad was asleep, and he said, 'Jesus Christ!' And then the next day he was like, 'Your mum told me something...' 'No, I told you that last night, that was what happened.'"

"I did want to tell people, but I just didn't because I thought I was still auditioning!" laughs Boyega. "It's post-traumatic stress, after seven months of that you still think you're auditioning, even though you're on set filming. 'Is this a screen test, JJ?'"

Although we're sure that Abrams' screen tests boast high production values, we're even more certain that there could have been no confusion once the actors stepped onto the sets. While the prequels were so heavily green-screened that Terence Stamp complained about having to act with a piece of paper stuck to a wall instead of Natalie Portman while filming *The Phantom Menace*, returning to the practical creature effects and real locations has been of paramount importance to the *Force Awakens* team. Shooting took place at the legendary Pinewood Studios, but first the team headed to Abu Dhabi, which doubled for Jakku.

"Pardon the pun, it was like a baptism of fire," Ridley tells us. "Firstly, being on location is a really nice thing for everybody to be together. You bond in a different way than you do if you just go home at the end of the day. It was terrifying, but also Abu Dhabi represents Jakku, which is Rey's home planet, so it felt like a really nice place to start. And because we started exactly with what everybody wanted from this *Star Wars*, which is like real tangible dirt, grit and dust, starting with that felt like the perfect place to begin."

"It was boiling, but it helped with the action, and with the intensity and the fear, because you're in the circumstance that your character's in," remembers Boyega. "I'm not in a studio with really hot lights. I'm actually hot, so I can't act any other way. It was really cool to be in that environment on the set despite the weather and all that kind of stuff."

"There was one time where JJ was like, 'So many people want to be



Both Boyega and Ridley spoke highly of the filming experience.

MEET THE CAST



It appears that Finn goes from Stormtrooper to Resistance fighter.

Meet Kylo Ren: the lethal enforcer of the First Order.



here,' and I was like, 'Okay, okay, I'm back!'" Ridley laughs. "It's mainly the exhaustion. It's not that you don't ever feel excited about doing what you're doing. But you could be doing the best job in the world, and you're still tired and want to have a nap. But when JJ said that I was like, 'Okay! Never lose the love!'"

Talking to these actors, it's clear that the love is very much still in place. Not only were Ridley and Boyega appearing in their first major Hollywood blockbuster, but it's *Star Wars*, and Boyega tells us that geeking out wasn't something that ever stopped. "It was continuous! First you have to put on



“This really is the beginning of Rey’s story”

Daisy Ridley



Gwendoline Christie is relishing playing the film’s first female baddie.

Daisy Ridley is Rey

A lone scavenger on the planet Jakku, Rey’s life is changed forever when she meets Finn and is drawn into his journey.

John Boyega is Finn

Finn starts off in incredible danger – and Stormtrooper armour. He has some big choices to make on his path to heroism.

Oscar Isaac is Poe Dameron

Poe Dameron is one of the best fighter pilots in the galaxy, and is committed to the Resistance.

Adam Driver is Kylo Ren

Kylo Ren is a First Order warrior who isn’t a Sith, but works for Snoke. Owns a lethal-looking custom lightsaber.

Gwendoline Christie is Captain Phasma

The leader of the First Order Stormtroopers. She has a blaster, and is a bad-ass.

Domhnall Gleeson is General Hux

One of the First Order officers, Hux is described as ruthless and having confidence in his methods.

Lupita Nyong’o is Maz Kanata

Details are scarce, but we know that she has a castle that’s refuge to the galaxy’s riff-raff.

Andy Serkis is Supreme Leader Snoke

The First Order leader and Kylo Ren’s mentor, and master of sinister trailer voiceovers.

BB8

This little scene-stealer is an Astromech Droid, and belongs to Poe Dameron. So why have we mostly seen it with Rey?

your costume. That’s number one geek-out. From there, you get called on set to rehearsal. You’re probably going to be on a new set. Number two geek-out. JJ tells you a secret about the story or the release of the movie. That’s number three geek-out. JJ tells you something else, and he’s excited, and every time JJ gets excited, everybody gets excited! So it’s like an average of ten times a day! All the scenes are so unique, it’s like coming to Disneyland every single day, but you’re just one of the characters.”

Even being completely encased in a metal Stormtrooper outfit couldn’t dampen Christie’s enthusiasm. “Let’s not forget that I was so overwhelmed and excited by just playing the part that things like not being physically comfortable stopped registering!” she laughs. “What was interesting about it was having some of your primary senses defused. You start to realise that it isn’t about the subtleties of facial expressions, it isn’t just about the way in which you’re making your clothing look. Every way you choose to move your body dictates something about the character, and that is giving the message to the audience. So it was really exciting to start to look at a



It will be interesting to see how our heroes’ fates cross.



Han and Chewie will team up with the series’ new leads.



Finn wields Anakin Skywalker’s lightsaber.

“I believe in JJ Abrams’ vision”

John Boyega





physical language, to look at what was neutral about the physical language, about what might indicate her gender, what that might mean, where you put the emphasis on your body. Your senses are blocked; maybe that says something about the person."

While Christie's costume puts a new spin on a classic design, there were plenty of original parts on set. When it was announced that Ford, Fisher and Hamill would be returning, every one of us got that little bit more excited about *The Force Awakens*. Unsurprisingly, Boyega tells us that their return was just as important to the actors. "Oh, it was fantastic. They were really excited about coming back, which for us feels great, because if they're excited then what could go wrong, right? It's a really good feeling to have Harrison and Carrie and Mark back on the project, and they're so enthusiastic about continuing to tell the story."

However, he's quick to dismiss the idea that his illustrious co-stars at all intimidated him. "No, no, no. I wasn't starstruck. The main reason being that

if you get starstruck, you miss out on the fundamental moments that you need, like getting Harrison to sign your action figures!" he grins. "You can't do that when you're starstruck; you have to be calm so you can ask politely. It was cool meeting Harrison, and they were all pretty laid back, and you feel like you're on the same team, you're doing this thing together. It's you trying to give a gift back to the world, which is another *Star Wars* movie after 13-plus years."

Meanwhile, Ridley tells us that Fisher did have one piece of advice when it came to playing a *Star Wars* leading lady. "Oh my god, she goes 'Fight the slave! Fight to the end!'" she laughs. "Yeah, there is no gold bikini. And there will not be. I think even with other films where there are women in them recently they're way over-sexualised, and Rey is just not. She's just not. People ask me about being a sex symbol, and it's just not that all. Which is great."

The fact that there are more strong female roles in *The Force Awakens* than any other *Star Wars* film has been encouraging and exciting, and Christie

THE FORCE REVISITED

WE EXAMINE EVERY PARSEC OF THE EPISODE VII TRAILER FOR CLUES TOWARDS THE FATE OF THE GALAXY...



1 Inside the Star Destroyer

Rey inside what we're assuming are the innards of the fallen Star Destroyer on Jakku. We're guessing she'll find something important there...



2 BB8 deviates

...and off she treks home, accompanied by BB8. Hang on, what's the adorable little droid doing there? Doesn't he belong to Poe Dameron? How does he even get to Jakku?



3 Worried about Rey

"Who are you?" says the voiceover, to which Rey replies "I'm no one." Is this the first meeting between Leia and Rey? Our hunch is there's more to her than meets the eye...



4 Unmasking a Stormtrooper

Meanwhile, Finn takes off his First Order Stormtrooper helmet. Note that it is caked with bloody handprints – Abrams has definitely upped the grittiness factor.



5 Out of control

We're assuming this is Finn's TIE crashing towards Jakku. Has he gone AWOL and been shot down in an escape attempt, or been involved in a battle gone wrong?



6 A new hope

Out of his Stormtrooper uniform, Finn wanders towards a built-up area of Jakku – we're guessing this is where he meets up with Rey.



7 Death Star 3.0?

Judging by the uniforms, we're reckoning this a First Order command ship. Maybe watching the poster's Death Star-esque superweapon in action?



8 Face of the First Order

Kylo Ren gets his close-up. "Nothing will stand in our way. I will finish what you started," he utters. Is he talking to someone – Luke, perhaps? Or just having a monologue?



9 Inside Poe Dameron

Oh dear – it looks like Oscar Isaac's Poe Dameron is a hostage of Kylo. What exactly is he doing to the X-Wing pilot? A form of Force-related torture?



10 Alderaan revisited

Shortly after Poe's scream, this flashes up. Are we seeing the effects of the First Order's new weapon? Is this Endor? The next Alderaan? Or a vision from Poe?



11 Flight of the Falcon

The Falcon soars through the wreckage of the Star Destroyer, pursued by two TIE Fighters, which seem ever so slightly more formidable this time around.



12 Uncovering the past

"There are stories about what happened. Is it true?" Is the Rebellion a legend already? Considering the Jedi were mere superstitions in *A New Hope*, it's possible.



13 Han remembers

"All of it," replies Han ruefully. He's changed his tune, considering his "hokey religion" comments when we first meet him.



14 Light speed ahead

Despite the focus on practical effects, there was always going to be a fair bit of CGI – nice to see the light-speed effects get an upgrade. Very Abrams-era *Star Trek*.



15 The Knights of Ren

Kylo with his fellow Knights of Ren, reportedly played by a number of cast members from *The Raid*. You probably wouldn't want to mess with them.



16 The battle commences

First Order Stormtroopers at the site of the upcoming X-Wing vs TIEs battle. And is that a massive wave heading their way in the distance?



17 Finn meets Poe

Now we know that Poe encounters Kylo Ren, is everything here as it seems? Finn definitely looks uneasy, although that could just be because he's off to fight.



18 Taking to the skies

Poe is the self-described "best frickin' pilot in the galaxy". Here he is in action backing up that statement, mowing down an unfortunate TIE Fighter.



19 Good guys look at explosions

A new shot of Finn, Rey and BB8 being pursued, while Han finished his earlier sentence by saying, "The Jedi; they're real." Surely the galaxy isn't that forgetful?



20 Maz Kanata's pad

We're going to assume that this is the castle of crime lord Maz Kanata (played by Lupita Nyong'o). Definitely looks a bit flashier than Jabba's palace.



21 Looking for Luke

Still our only shot of Luke Skywalker – they're really keeping his role under wraps. Is he just sat around a fire for warmth, or next to another funeral pyre?



22 Meet Captain Phasma

Our first new shot of Gwendoline Christie's Captain Phasma, striding through a torched settlement on Jakku. Another one you wouldn't want to mess with.



23 Kylo passes judgement

In case Kylo Ren's villainous credentials were in any doubt, here he is delivering what looks like an execution with his lightsaber.



24 A hero falls?

Rey sits distraught next to... a body? Has a much-loved Star Wars character fallen? Who could it be? Han? Luke? Chewie???? It better not be.



25 Who hurt Chewie?

It looks like Finn, Chewbacca (complete with bandage) and Han have been taken prisoner – although judging by where they're looking, help could be on the way.



26 Attack on Starkiller Base

Already the breakout star of the movie, BB-8 takes to the skies in yet another battle on the snow-covered planet, home to the First Order's Starkiller Base.



27 Don't mess with Rey

Clearly, you don't want to make Rey angry. Is she trying to avenge the death of whoever fell in the scene previously?



28 Han and Leia reunited

Leia and Han are reunited – daaaaaw. But is this the reunion of two long-separated loves, or them consoling each other over a mutual loss?



29 Finn suits up

Finn with Anakin Skywalker's lightsaber – reportedly what Kylo Ren has been looking for all this time. In fairness he looks pretty confident here...



30 Unmasked and dangerous

...although he is definitely a bit shook up now Kylo has his hood off. And with a final voiceover of "Just let it in", there we have it! Get your tickets booked...



tells us that Captain Phasma is quite unique in the saga.

"I'm very excited about Captain Phasma," she explains. "Not just because she's *Star Wars*' first female villain, but a little bit more than that is, in a new film from a series of films that is iconic, we have a female character, and we judge her not on that random bunch of elements that comes together when we're being formed and dictates the way that we look, but we judge her on her choices. We judge her on her character, and it isn't about her being typically or stereotypically female; it is about her being a villain. We form a relationship with a woman based on her actions rather than the way that she looks."

"I think JJ has been open about the fact that he wanted to preserve the authenticity of the first three films while bringing the franchise into the modern world," Christie continues. "And one of the ways they've done that is to have a progressive female characters. Kathleen Kennedy asked me if I'd ever Googled female heroines, and I hadn't. She showed me what the image results are, and they're very conventional – if somewhat sexualised – images of women. One of the things that they've done that's been incredibly progressive with this franchise is that you have a character like Captain Phasma, and we form that relationship with her due to her actions and due to her character rather than it being about the way that she looks. And I think the way that she looks is fabulous, but it also isn't conventionally female."

"Everyone was talking about how many females are in the thing. I think what JJ has done, which is really good, is not just putting people in for the sake of it," adds Ridley. "Rey isn't important because she's a woman; she's just important, and she's a woman. I think what Rey represents is such a positive thing for people all over the world, female and male, to look to in a film and connect with. I'm very happy with what this story says about women and how it represents women."

Given the positivity in the room, it seems cruel to bring up the idea of a backlash, and the fact that not everything in the film will appeal to every *Star Wars* fan, but the actors are at ease with the oncoming storm. "I might be bad, guys," Ridley tells us. "That's the truth of the matter. People hopefully will really like me and Rey, but people might not. And if they don't, I will cry all Christmas, but being in *Star Wars* is like being part of a greater thing. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and I feel part of an ensemble, and that feels safe and nice."

"A phrase I learned last year was 'Standing on the shoulders of giants,' which I feel like I was doing the whole way through, like 'I really don't know what I'm doing, and everyone will know that,' but the people I had around me were so talented and kind and supportive that I feel like I did the best that I could possibly have done."

"My main fixation is that I get to watch a *Star Wars* film in the cinemas,"

"It really seems to inspire something in people" Gwendoline Christie

So far, *The Force Awakens* has kept its secrets well.



Boyega tells us. "That's never happened to me before. I know I'm going to be shocked. If you hear someone at the back of the cinema screaming and laughing and crying, it's probably me."

It feels appropriate to end our conversation on the subject of the excitement that we all seem to be sharing, and we feel compelled to ask if Christie ever felt overwhelmed by the legacy of what she was joining. "You have to look at anything you approach as a series of words on a page," she tells us. "And what those words mean, what the whole thing means, and what it's trying to say. I think if I put my focus onto the legacy then I probably would get under a stone and not get out. But it was actually really exciting to be a part of this thing! That's meant so much to me, and that's meant so much to other people. Most people have a childlike and pure love for the films, and there's something very unique and special about them, that it doesn't matter when they're on if you happen to be watching the television; you will watch it. You want to get involved with it, because it puts you into a joyful mindset."

"Comic-Con was a really extraordinary experience because of just that. I was quite overwhelmed to be there. I was talking to JJ afterwards, and I said, 'What is that feeling in the room? It isn't hysteria, it's more than euphoria, it's something more.' And he said, 'It's hope.' And I really think that's what it is; it really seems to inspire something in people. It's that wonderful feeling of hope that connects us back to a simple place of happiness." ☺

Star Wars: The Force Awakens will be released in UK cinemas on 17 December.



It's not even out, and BB8 is already the breakout star.

ARCHETYPE TOP TRUMPS

HEROES AND VILLAINS! COLLECT THEM ALL!

STAR WARS **The Wide-eyed Hero**
Rebellion

Heart	95
Combat	76
Force Strength	80
Romance Potential	67
Dark Side Susceptibility	50

Destined for great things, this character will have to have everything explained to him at first, but will be very excited about their greater place in the galaxy.

STAR WARS **The Rogue**
Rebellion

Heart	78
Combat	89
Force Strength	1
Romance Potential	90
Dark Side Susceptibility	20

Reckless? Sure. Moral code a little grey? Absolutely. But they have all the best lines, they get the girl, and they will most definitely come through in a crisis.

STAR WARS **The Princess**
Rebellion

Heart	92
Combat	80
Force Strength	30
Romance Potential	92
Dark Side Susceptibility	30

The Star Wars princess is stronger than your average damsel. They're actively working for good, putting themselves in danger to do the right thing.

STAR WARS **The Wizard**
Rebellion

Heart	90
Combat	86
Force Strength	90
Romance Potential	23
Dark Side Susceptibility	20

These guys have all the answers. They prompt our hero's journey, they are an unequivocal force for good, and they're probably going to die.

STAR WARS **The Plucky Sidekick**
Rebellion

Heart	95
Combat	40
Force Strength	1
Romance Potential	20
Dark Side Susceptibility	1

Always there at the right time and always ready to add a little heart, they don't have an arc as such, but they're crucial in reminding us what it's all about.

STAR WARS **The Dark Knight**
Empire

Heart	20
Combat	94
Force Strength	91
Romance Potential	7
Dark Side Susceptibility	90

The right hand of the Dark Side, they are out in the field getting evil's bidding done. A threat to be certain, but they might be hiding some humanity.

STAR WARS **The Evil Puppet Master**
Empire

Heart	1
Combat	97
Force Strength	99
Romance Potential	30
Dark Side Susceptibility	99

The bad guy behind the bad guy, the puppet master is nothing but dark, twisted evil whose ambition and cruelty know no bounds. Tails a lot about being evil.

STAR WARS **The Wild Card**
Rebellion

Heart	60
Combat	75
Force Strength	1
Romance Potential	80
Dark Side Susceptibility	40

Loyalty can be a hard thing to come by in the Imperial conflict, and even the coolest characters can make decisions they regret.

STAR WARS **The Expendable**
Rebellion

Heart	75
Combat	30
Force Strength	1
Romance Potential	40
Dark Side Susceptibility	1

Every side has one, the character who pops up, has a name, and recklessly makes the decision that gets someone killed. That someone is them. They get killed.

MAD AS HELL

WE KNOW WHAT THE APOCALYPSE LOOKS LIKE; WE'VE SEEN IT A MILLION TIMES, WHETHER IT'S OVERRUN WITH ZOMBIES, SCAVENGERS OR PSYCHOS.

It's an arid, endless wasteland where everything wants to kill you. It's a violent, heartless hell. We know this because George Miller showed it to us.

Every genre has its defining movie. George A. Romero told us what zombies were, Ridley Scott set the template for every urban sci-fi since *Blade Runner*, and George Miller defined the post-apocalypse movie. Not only that, he gave us the man who drove through it: Mad Max Rockatansky.

Now, 30 years after we last saw him, Miller has revived his greatest creation for another ride through the desert furnace. He may have a new face courtesy of star Tom Hardy, but every glimpse we've seen of *Fury Road* has reassured us that this is most definitely Max.

"George gave birth to that apocalyptic environment," Hardy enthuses. "He invented that fantasy, visual world. There are a lot of references which just go back to *Mad Max* and the words 'post-Apocalyptic.' He really invented the car-chase movie, and this is just full on. He's taken all the assets we have now with 30 years worth of thinking, and poured it into X amount of hundreds of millions of dollars worth of care. He's enjoyed every second of it."

Indeed, there's only one man we would trust to bring Max back to the big screen. It's rare for a film series, especially in this genre, to so clearly bear the stamp of a

THE END IS FINALLY NIGH. GEORGE MILLER AND TOM HARDY TALK ABOUT BRINGING BACK MAD MAX FOR ANOTHER FULL-THROTTLE RIDE THROUGH THE APOCALYPSE IN THE YEAR'S SURPRISE HIT

single creator. Miller tells us that it was slightly surreal to return to the world that he defined for a fourth film. "It was very familiar and very strange," remembers Miller. "Mainly familiar, because when you work on a film it's like working with imaginary friends. And because it's three decades later, the world has changed



MAD MAX



“HE HAS NOT GOT ANY SUPERHERO ABILITIES. BUT HE IS AS ICONIC AS YOUR BATMAN OR YOUR SUPERMAN”
TOM HARDY

so much – meaning the world we live in and the technology. And I think the way we perceive films has changed. It was interesting to be back after doing animation, because there’s an intensity, strange sort of masochistic exhilaration of live action, being in the desert crashing cars and risking it all. Things could go horribly wrong.”

Miller has had a rich and varied career in the 30 years since Max braved Thunderdome, taking in the likes of *Witches Of Eastwick* and *Happy Feet*, but the question of a new *Mad Max* film was always on everyone’s minds, including Miller’s.

“We were able to go back into that post-apocalyptic world. It took me a long time to figure out why I was so seduced by it,” he explains. “I couldn’t stop thinking about it. This world is very, very elemental, very spare, and therefore you can tell stories within, which basically are allegories, in morality anyway. The simplest way to describe them is a Western on wheels.”

NEVITABLY, A LOT OF QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED ABOUT HOW FURY ROAD FITS INTO THE SERIES, AND IT’S A QUESTION THAT MILLER SEEMS KEEN TO BAT AWAY. “IT’S NOT A REBOOT

and it’s not a sequel,” he explains. “The best description I have is a revisit. It certainly goes back to the first apocalyptic world. Essentially, we set out to do a chase. It’s pretty much a 110-minute chase, and during that chase you discover the characters and their relationships and the back story.” The film throws Max into a break-neck journey across the desert alongside the determined Imperator Furiosa (Charlize Theron), with the monstrous Immortan Joe (Hugh Keays-Byrne, who played Toe Cutter in the original *Mad Max*), tearing after them.

Every *Mad Max* film needs two sides for Max to find himself between, and Miller tells us that Theron’s Furiosa has a lot in common with our hero. “She’s the boss of

a war rig, and she’s essentially a female road warrior,” he explains. “But unlike Max she has purpose. Max is running from his past and from his better nature. She’s very strong. We wanted an actress who is unmistakably a woman, but had made no concessions to being the kind of strong warrior. Charlize has the ability and the passion as an actor to go there without fear. I think there’s a character there that we haven’t seen before.”

“Charlize is not afraid to just bare everything in her work,” enthuses Hardy. “And she can back it up as well.”

With the basic plot structure established, the question of who exactly would play Max was raised. Miller tells us that Gibson was involved in discussions back in the early Noughties, but it soon became clear that another actor would be needed to step into the leathers and 1,000-yard stare. “When I

Charlize Theron was picked for her bad-ass femininity.

THE MADDEST OF THE MAD

Charting the craziest moments of the *Mad Max* series, one rev at a time

- 1 Mad Max
- 2 Mad Max 2
- 3 Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome

The Nightrider cops it
Mad Max opens with an incredible chase, as the Nightrider trails destruction that ends in a fireball.



Man’s best friend
Max’s dog is one of the most underappreciated elements in *Mad Max 2*, and we especially love it when he holds a shotgun.



Cooked Goose
Following tradition, Toe Cutter is particularly nasty villain, as evidenced by convincing Johnny to burn Goose alive.



Tina Turner
Tina Turner’s presence in the film is a source of amazement. She has lots of fun calling Mel Gibson “Raggedy man.”



The pigs
Miller’s future as co-writer of *Babe* was foreshadowed with the importance of pigs in his vision for the future.





first met Mel I just thought he was a really interesting actor," remembers Miller. "But there was a quality about him. On one hand you wanted to really get to know him, because he was very lovable, but on the other hand there was that element of danger and unpredictability. It's like when you work with animals. It's like you see a tiger – it's so beautiful and powerful and you just want to pet them, but they're a tiger. There is that paradoxical thing that gives these actors charisma. The moment I saw Tom, he felt to me like Mel did all those years ago."

When it came to taking on the role of Max, Hardy tells us that the decision was an easy one. "I didn't hesitate at all," he states. "I think, as a young actor, to play Max is a huge opportunity. It's fantastic. To be honoured and graced to get the opportunity to play, out of all the superheroes that are about – bottom

line – the most cool." He also made sure to clear the air with his predecessor, who unsurprisingly signed off on Miller's choice. "Oh, yeah, we had lunch," remembers Hardy. "It was a 'hand the baton over' moment. It just seemed like the right thing to do... Mel's Max, right? It was an experience. And he told my agents that it was really good that I was playing Max, and that they had probably found someone who's more insane than he was! I take that as a compliment."

But who is Max, beyond the man in the biker leathers? The first film plays out as a chase spin on a revenge movie, as highway cop Max punishes the lowlifes who brutalised his family and partner. It's in *Mad Max 2* that we get a better idea of who the character is in Miller's fully post-apocalyptic world. He's a man who's looking to be on the road alone, but there are lines that he won't stand to see crossed. He's more of a spiritual cousin to Clint Eastwood's *Man With No Name* or Toshiro Mifune's *Samurai* than he is a six-packed saviour of the world's end.

"The thing about Max is that he is quite real," enthuses Hardy. "Things hurt Max. He is not somebody who can fly, or somebody who if he stubs his toe, it is not going to hurt. He is not someone who can just leap across a river. He has not got any superhero abilities. But he is as iconic as your Batman or your Superman; he is very earthed. He was one of our 'superheroes', if you like, who wasn't necessarily a superhero, but an iconic character; in the same way that Batman would be. The world around him is fantastical, but built on very solid materials."

The solid world of *Fury Road* is built in Namibia, rather than Broken Hill, Australia as originally planned. Miller and his team needed a location where they could realistically shoot a movie that's essentially one giant car chase. From *Mad Max*'s hot-pursuit opening to the train-bound capering of *Thunderdome*, each of the previous films have boasted incredible chase sequences,

and Miller embraced the possibilities that a higher budget and the latest filmmaking tools could offer.

IN TERMS OF THE TECHNOLOGY IT'S A BIG DIFFERENCE," HE EXPLAINS. "WE CAN DO A LOT MORE. FIRST OF ALL, WE WORKED WITH DIGITAL CAMERAS, WHICH MEANS THAT YOU can put them anywhere. Some of them we could buy at the airport for \$2,000, and if you wreck them it didn't wreck the budget. You can put them places we could not before, and get your camera crew out of the way of an explosion or a big crash."

Still, it wouldn't be a *Mad Max* film without having its fair share of hair-raising stunts. The original films set the bar for insane car crashes that you can't believe were actually created, let alone survived. Hardy stresses that Miller's legendary prowess has not diminished, and that although CGI has been used, a huge amount of effort was put into keeping the effects as practical as possible.

"This is very specifically a film in which there is a very minimal amount of CG," he explains. "There's a huge amount of effects work going on, but it's very minimally computer generated. Every single vehicle, every single person you see thrown about, every single accident, every single fight, there are people actually attacking each other. There were over a hundred stunt lads and girls on a daily basis for six months. I think every time you see something happen that was a moment which we lived fully, some more fully than others. And then repeatedly to get the shot right. So every time we see a car roll over or a lorry being spun in the air or things flying at you, they're actually really there."

"You've got people actually trying not to kill themselves in the pursuit of somebody's dream. And they actually make something

Charlize Theron's *Furiosa* has become a feminism icon.



Miller likened Hardy's personality to Gibson's: lovable but dangerous.

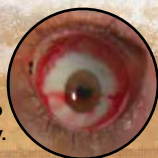


Miller called Theron's *Furiosa* "a female road warrior".



Head on collision

Toe Cutter gets his come-uppance as Max chases the biker gang leader directly into the path of an oncoming lorry.



Handcuffed

Max gives Johnny a choice. Cuffed to a car about to explode, he must choose to cut through his restraints – or his ankle.



Boomerang

It's tough to top the arrival of the Humongous' force, but the feral kid throwing a deadly boomerang at them is crazier.



Wez

Few villains make as big an impression as Vernon Wells' Wez, with his outlandish costume and gleeful villainy.



The final chase

It's hard choose a moment from *Mad Max 2*'s finale, but we'd pick the look on Wez's face as he realises he's about to crash.



THUNDERDOME!

It's surprising how briefly Thunderdome actually appears. Two men enter. One man leaves.



Tomorrow-morrow Land

Max bundles the desert kids into Jedediah's plane to head for Sydney, where Savannah tells the story for the 'membering.

come to life. This is what makes *Mad Max* really brilliant. Everything you see is happening: lots of smashed cars, all the explosions, they were there. All those cars, they went over. Everybody was up there in the sun, in 100+ degrees, every day, for six months, eight months, nine months some people. It was a huge orchestration.”

The heat wasn't the only challenge to come from shooting in the Namibian desert. A remote location is desirable when you're mounting a car chase that stretches out for the length of a film, but heading out into the desert away from civilisation was something of a mixed blessing.

NAMIBIA'S A VERY COOL COUNTRY, VERY WELCOMING, AND VERY BEAUTIFUL, TOO," REMEMBERS HARDY. "BUT WE WERE RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE. SO AFTER

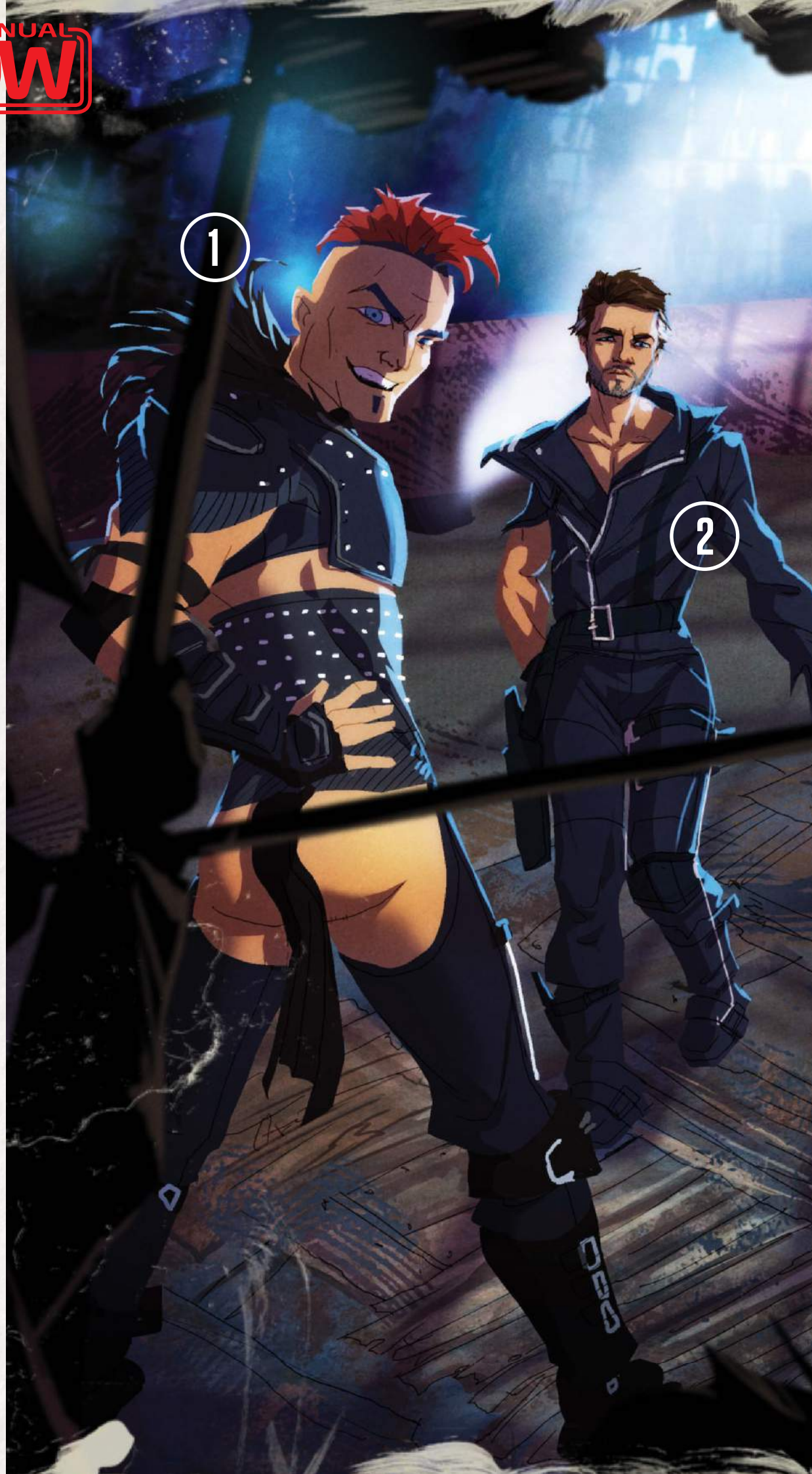
a few months you do start to see yourself in anything – and not always in the best way. They say, 'A man will find himself in the desert.' It's pretty silent and you realise how small you are. On the one hand, it's incredibly comforting because nobody bothers you. You would go a bit potty. But it was a lot of leather and yeast infections.”

The delays to the production were well publicised. There were issues with the locations, there were reshoots – it feels like we've been waiting a very long time for the madness. However, he's been living with this world for a lot longer than we have, and we suspect it will be worth the wait. He's just as entranced by the sun-blasted landscape and the loner who drives through it as we are.

“There is so much noise out there it's hard to know what the truths are,” he tells us. “The straightest line to the truth is through story and there's a beauty. So you've got to sort of try to find something and that's why we tell each other stories. By taking that reduced world, you don't have to deal with the complexities that we deal with, and you can get down to much more elemental human behaviour. The other thing is the visual part of it. There are no trees in *Fury Road*. To actually put vehicles and people in that landscape is visually very exciting as well. Basically, it allows me to make a western on wheels. I'll say you don't have to be crazy to make a *Mad Max* movie, but...”

“I'm really pleased for George, because he's really smashed it,” enthuses Hardy. “He deserves that, it looks brilliant, and that's testament to every asset he had from design right through to the stunt guys. It's just brilliant that George managed to put it together. And I hope he does more, to be fair, because it's a brilliant kick-off point.” ☞

Mad Max: Fury Road is now available on Blu-ray. Max will return in the announced sequel *Mad Max: The Wasteland*.



3

4

5

6

THUNDERDOME FASHION WEEK

Welcome to Thunderdome, where fashionistas from around the desert come to judge the latest offerings from designers of fetish gear, biker leathers and repurposed sports equipment. Whether you're a leader or a lieutenant, a fighter or a talker, there's something here for everyone. Six models enter, one model leaves...

1 Wez

If you find yourself the lieutenant/ loose cannon of a marauding gang of lunatics, you're going to want to stand out. Leather, spikes, a Mohawk and the crucial ass-less chaps make you unforgettable.

2 Max

Max is sporting the loner look. Biker leathers are a must in the dusty wasteland of the apocalypse, and these are all business. If you absolutely must have companionship, get a dog.

3 Immortan Joe

You're a warlord, and you want everyone to know it. You also might have some kind of respiratory issues, so this terrifying mask acts as a breathing aid. Muscle suit and medals are fun flourishes.

4 Auntie Entity

Technically, Master might be the ruler of Bartertown but when you look this fabulous, everyone's going to know who's really in charge. Big hair and chainmail? None more fierce.

5 Warrior Woman

Leave the fetish gear to the nutters. If you want to survive the end in style, kit yourself up in hockey pads, mesh movement gear and a headband for the ultimate good-but-tough Glamazon look.

6 The Humungous

People can't be wondering who the leader of this band of psychos is. Make a statement and let everyone know who you are with this daring ensemble. Straps, studded pants and a Jason Voorhees mask. Done.



CAPITOL



PUNISHMENT

IT STARTED WITH A SPARK. IT WILL END WITH AN INFERNO. LOCK UP YOUR DICTATORS; KATNISS IS BACK. WE TALK TO THE CAST AND CREW ABOUT MOCKINGJAY PART 2...

When Katniss Everdeen volunteered for her sister at the 74th Hunger Games Reaping, she knew her life would change forever. What she didn't anticipate was that she'd change the lives of the whole of Panem. Since then, she has killed, faked a marriage, faked a pregnancy, sparked a rebellion and, in President Snow's eyes, become the most dangerous woman in the world.

Returning to follow Katniss to victory for *Mockingjay – Part 2* are her loyal friends, her arena allies and her propaganda team, including Peeta Mellark (Josh Hutcherson), Gale Hawthorne (Liam Hemsworth), Finnick

Odair (Sam Claflin), and propo director Cressida (Natalie Dormer). Threats have been made. Blood has been spilt. We've almost reached the end of Katniss's struggle against Snow.

Dormer believes that Katniss and *The Hunger Games* have also come a long way for teenage girls, women, and the film industry as a whole over the last four years. "Some men have a misconception that female empowerment has to have a sexual [element] to it," she explains. "It has to be the sexy ninja in her tight leather pants or whatever. There's a place for that in the entertainment industry, of course there is. But Katniss Everdeen is a role model because she's a real human being. She's a real teenage girl with flaws and foibles and unsavoury parts of her character. She's the reluctant heroine, the reluctant hero. And so that means it's accessible to young women, and importantly for the guys in Hollywood who finance movies, it's proven itself through breaking records to be incredibly economically viable. So as soon as they understand that storytelling like this is commercially viable, then hopefully we will get more roles and more characters like Katniss Everdeen."

Does that mean we can count *The Hunger Games* amongst the few Hollywood-produced feminist franchises? "I think 'feminist franchise' is giving it a mantle... If your understanding of 'feminist' is just pure equality then of course it is," Dormer tells us. "But sometimes that word scares people off. It's a very human story, and it's wonderfully irrelevant that the lead protagonist happens to be female as opposed to male. That's what I love about *The Hunger Games*. Characters like President Coin (Julianne Moore) or Cressida could very easily have been played by men. They could very easily have been male characters. [Author] Suzanne Collins decided to make them female, but they're not defined by their gender. They are defined by their beliefs or their job, and that's what I think we are ultimately looking for in the future. That's when you know you've got real equality."

"I would hope that there are more opportunities for women," contributes Lawrence. "I was having a conversation with somebody about the struggles of the kind of weight on the industry, because I know that that's something I talk non-stop about, and they said, but all of the main movie stars aren't really underweight. All of you guys – and I said, 'Well, yeah, because once you get to a certain place people will hire you and they just want you to be in the movie, so

"THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING A WARRIOR AND BEING A SYMBOL OF A REVOLUTION"

JENNIFER LAWRENCE

they don't care.' It's more of a struggle for the actors and actresses who have not made it to a certain place where they're hired for all kinds of roles, no matter what, and there's a lot of pressure. And I feel like I'm not really at a place where I could complain or speak about it, because I'm not getting enough roles. I am very lucky and I have a lot of opportunities. I would be interested to hear someone who is *not* in two franchises answer that question."

For fans, it's been fascinating watching Katniss transform from a vulnerable teenager living in extreme poverty into a Victor and a symbol of hope and rebellion. "At the beginning of Katniss's story, she was trying to save her sister and she was

trying to save herself, and then Peeta and waking up at District 13 changed things," says Lawrence. "Losing Peeta changed things, and I believe that she kind of grows into her position and takes control of her destiny and the revolution, because it was a growing, developing thing. She was a young girl and was just trying to survive, and was scared and I don't think that she really wanted it. I think that it was something that I really loved about the second movie. That's when she takes power and decides that she does believe in this cause."

"Also, there's a difference between being a warrior and being a symbol of a revolution, that character that wants





to take action and do what needs to be done," says Nina Jacobson, the producer of all four films. "I think she might be willing to give up the Mockingjay, but not give up the revolutionary. I think also that once you disrupt the story the establishment wants to tell, anything can happen, and change becomes possible if people are brave enough to pursue it. The Capitol has complete control over the media in the first movie. Katniss begins to break that at the end of the first movie, and over the course of this revolution. Who is in charge of the media and what they do with it becomes enormously important to the outcome. And it is only through the pursuit of truth and just the defiance of the system that our characters ultimately do create change."

"I'm a fan of sci-fi and fantasy when it is done in such a way that informs our modern world," says Dormer. "You know, you only have to look at the images from what's going on in the news at the moment to see displacement of refugees and people repressed by their governments and chasms between those who have and those who have not. That's what is so strong about *The Hunger Games*. It explores consequences of war and all those darker human traits that it deals with in the real world."

Katniss isn't the only character who has been undergoing drastic

changes since day one. A revolution is a team effort, after all. As one of Katniss's most trusted allies and sometimes-love-interest, Gale Hawthorne (Liam Hemsworth) has been through some pretty intense stuff himself.

"Gale is sort of right where he wants to be right now," Hemsworth tells us. "He's an emotional, strong-willed, independent, angry young man. Little things have happened to him that have made him feel the way he feels and his biggest motivation is to take down the Capitol. That's all he's really thinking about, and I think his focus becomes less about Katniss and more about winning this war. And he's a little bit of a ticking time bomb in a way, I guess, because he sees red. There's quite a disagreement in opinions between Katniss and Gale on this one, because they have very different views about what's acceptable and what's right and wrong. And he's sort of willing to do anything to end this problem. But it was definitely a great kind of journey to take after the last few movies of really sitting on its outliers and sort of having to watch it all happen. Now, this is his chance to get in and get back at it all."

Likewise, Peeta (Josh Hutcherson) is set to level back up after being held captive and tortured at the Capitol's Tribute Centre since the events of *Catching Fire*'s surprising finale. Brainwashed into nearly killing Katniss



at the climax of *Part 1*, by the start of the sequel he still hasn't quite recovered. "For me, I was really attracted to Peeta throughout the story, and I think he starts as more quiet and not so secure in himself," says Hutcherson. "He has a hard opinion on life and everything, and once he kind of confesses his love for Katniss he empowers himself in a way. And then, in *Mockingjay – Part 1*, he is tortured and brainwashed and all these things, and it's kind of out of that and the recovery process. It's up and down. I think it shows the experience that he has."

Even Cressida, who only joined Katniss's entourage halfway through



MOCKINGJAY

FIGHTING WITH FINNICK

The lizard mutts in the trailers look amazing. Did you have to act opposite someone pretending to be a lizard?

Yeah! The stunt guys, who were incredible, they were all wearing white leotards with little black spots on. So for me, having the opportunity to do all my fight sequences with real people was very helpful, compared to the monkey scenes in the first movie I did, *Catching Fire*, where there was nothing there, so we were fighting the air which proves quite difficult for special effects as well as us.

Have you ever hurt anyone while you were filming fights?

It's happened a couple of times actually with stunt guys. Partly because I guess Finnick spends a lot of his time fighting and I broke my finger when we filmed *Catching Fire* during a rehearsing. Total accident, but I was told that my left hook needed a bit of work. It looked a bit flimsy. So I decided to show them that I could be hard, but it ended up connecting with the side of a guy's temple! He had to take a step away and sit down for a while, and then I realised that I'd broken my finger.

Finnick has just sat around at lot so far in District 13. Did you relish the opportunity to get out and fight again?

This is a funny story. The trident, as amazing as it was, a part of me was very angry that I didn't get to shoot a gun, because all the other guys were carrying guns! I was pretty useless. I was running around with a trident just like, "This is no good to anybody right now!" Unless it's close combat. Everyone else had machine guns and could shoot from miles away, and I'm stuck with a trident, a spiky fork in the background.

SCI-FI'S MOST WANTED

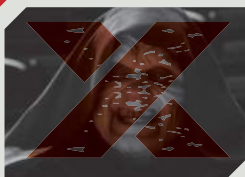
NOTORIOUS DICTATOR, OR JUST A DICK? WHO IS THE WORST LEADER IN THE UNIVERSE?



Immortan Joe

WANTED FOR: Withholding water and keeping wives

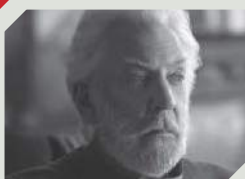
REWARD: Lifetime supply of crops (or whatever we have)



Palpatine

WANTED FOR: Turning the galaxy into his own regime

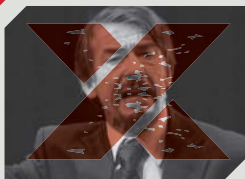
REWARD: The freedom of the galaxy



Coriolanus Snow

WANTED FOR: Lying, cheating and sending innocent children to their deaths

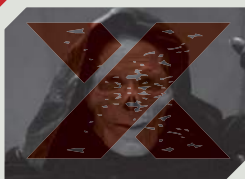
REWARD: The key to Panem



Adam Sutler

WANTED FOR: Oppressing, regressing and distressing

REWARD: A celebration held in your honour



Skeletor

WANTED FOR: Being evil, villainous and cackling a lot

REWARD: Never watching *Masters Of The Universe* again

"KATNISS TAKES POWER AND DECIDES THAT SHE DOES BELIEVE IN THIS CAUSE"

JENNIFER LAWRENCE

Mockingjay – Part 1 is developing for the conclusion. "That's what I like about Cressida," Dormer tells us. "She's pretty together under fire all the way through. You see the nature of her job change. It becomes less about filming props halfway through *Mockingjay – Part 2* and more about just surviving, so her and her cameramen pick up their weapons and are busy struggling to survive themselves. That's what I like about her; she's very cool and calm under duress, which is fun to play."

After working on the series and spending so much time with the cast and crew, Hemsworth is sorry to see the story draw to a close: "For all of it us it was extremely emotional to have this project come to an end, and I think we were all really lucky to have remained such good friends and shared such a special experience together. It was a crazy world to be thrown into, an amazing project to be a part of, and to really grow up together doing. We're all, you know, what was it? I think about the person I was then and the person I am now. All of us, you know, we've grown up so much, and changed so much, and this will always be such a really special time in my life."

"[My last day of shooting was] really bizarre," admits Claflin. "I thought my last day was a Thursday, so I'd said all my goodbyes and did a huge run around and made sure I said goodbye to every





single person and gave them a hug and gave them a kiss and gave them a card that said thank you, and then at the end of the day when they said, 'That's a wrap!' Someone then said, 'Oh, actually, we need you guys to come in tomorrow morning.' So I said all my goodbyes and had to come in the next day for 20 seconds to do one more shot that they didn't quite get that day!"

Yet there's still time for another revelation before the big finale. Fans of *The Hunger Games* who aren't quite ready to say goodbye yet can console themselves with the ever-circling rumours that Lionsgate are planning a spin-off. The rumours, sadly, remain as such (for now), and we're definitely not going to start counting our chickens any time soon, but Claflin knows what he'd like to see from the series next.

"There are so many different options for origin stories that they could do," he says. "I think Haymitch's story is one that would interest me, how he won, and then what happened to him post, but also I think the beginning of the *Hunger Games* is a story that should be told as well. How and why they started it, the first one. Even when we get into that in the *Hunger Games*, you're made to feel that this happens a lot, and yes, we disagree with it. I feel like that first one must have caused huge amounts of uproar. We're going to kill 24 little kids, I mean, it's messed up. But someone had to make that decision to begin with."

What about a look at Finnick Odair's origins? "I think I'm a bit old for that now!" he laughs. "I think the most interesting part of his story was when he won the *Hunger Games* at the age of 14, and I have a feeling that I might be a little too old for that. I could play Finnick's dad, maybe. But he is a character that I think it really interesting and worthy of an origin story. I don't know that my acting ability is that good, unless they CGI'd me." ☞

The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 2 is in cinemas from 19 November.



GESTURES OF GOOD WILL

SOMETIMES A HAND GESTURE IS ALL IT TAKES TO GET SOMEONE ON YOUR SIDE. OR TEAR THEM DOWN. HERE'S A *HANDY* GUIDE TO GESTURING IN THE SCI-FI WORLD



Three-fingered salute

(*The Hunger Games*)

INSTRUCTIONS: Kiss the tips of your index, middle and ring fingers on your left hand before raising them into the air with your palm facing outwards.

MEANING: Thanks, admiration and goodbye to someone you love



Live long and prosper

(*Star Trek*)

INSTRUCTIONS: Facing your palm outwards, part your fingers between the middle and index. Stick out your thumb. Say 'live long and prosper' without blinking.

MEANING: Live long and prosper



The bird

(*Guardians Of The Galaxy*)

INSTRUCTIONS: Make a fist at your enemy before turning an invisible crank on the side of your hand and slowly raising your middle finger.

MEANING: Back off, biatch



Go, web, go

(*Spider-Man*)

INSTRUCTIONS: Make the sign of the horns with your index and little fingers. Stick out your thumb. Shoot a web from your wrist and swing from tall buildings.

MEANING: I am here to save the day



Glowing finger

(*ET*)

INSTRUCTIONS: Point with your index finger while making the tip of it glow. Make your buddy do the same and connect to heal their wounds.

MEANING: May I borrow your landline telephone?



Missing hand

(*The Empire Strikes Back*)

INSTRUCTIONS: Hold our your hand and get your long lost father to cut it off. When your hand detaches from the rest of your arm, howl out in pain.

MEANING: I have daddy issues



size matters not

We spoke to director Peyton Reed to find out why you should give Ant-Man a chance, and how it ties in to Marvel's Phase Three...

ANT MAN

Ant-Man

WHEN DIRECTOR EDGAR WRIGHT LEFT ANT-MAN WELL INTO PRODUCTION IN MAY LAST YEAR, IT WAS KIND OF A BIG DEAL. AFTER EXPLAINING THE reason was due to "creative differences", fans that had been following the film's progress went into meltdown. Some announced they would be boycotting it, and Joss Whedon tweeted a solemn picture of himself holding up a Cornetto Mint in solidarity with Wright. It was a blow, considering he had been working on the film passionately since 2006.

It wasn't long before Marvel Studios announced his replacement in the form of *Bring It On* director Peyton Reed, but many still weren't convinced. Although his filmography doesn't exactly showcase it, Reed has as much geek credibility as anyone. We spoke to the director to find out why *Ant-Man* was the project he'd been waiting for.

"I've done mostly comedies, but I've wanted to do a big superhero/science fiction movie for a very long time," he tells us. "They're the types of movies that made me want to make movies as a kid in the first place. So to have the opportunity to do it, I think I was primed and ready, and when I came aboard, I flew to Atlanta and soaked everything in. I read all the drafts of the scripts, immediately started working with the writers and storyboard artists, and just hit the ground running, which is kind of the case on every movie. But on this one, a gigantic movie with a lot of technical components to it that had to be corralled very quickly... Fortunately, one of the great things about working at Marvel is in every department across the board, you're supported by people

Crosby

ANT TESTIMONIAL

"I don't know him too well as I only have a lifespan of 45 to 60 days, but he seems like an okay guy."

Stills

ANT TESTIMONIAL

"The endoskeleton freaks me out a bit."



The *Dark Knight*'s David Dastmalchian features in the cast.

who are at the top of their game. It's been an amazing experience."

As someone who grew up mentally living in the Marvel universe, Reed finds the idea of the MCU, and the fact that everything crosses over into other films, incredibly exciting. With Hayley Atwell (Agent Peggy Carter) and John Slattery (Howard Stark) set to reprise their roles in *Ant-Man*, Reed seems to be taking full advantage of the fact.

"One of the things I love about the MCU is how it parallels the Marvel comics universe. As a kid, I used to love reading a *Fantastic Four* issue and seeing some of the Avengers show up, or reading *Spider-Man* and seeing the Hulk show up," Reed says.

"I loved that cross-pollination, so for me, I don't think of [the crossovers] as a Marvel mandate. What I love about Hank Pym is in the movie, Michael Douglas is Hank Pym in the history

of the Marvel universe. You'll get to see Hank Pym and get a sense of his history as Ant-Man before Scott Lang came in. You'll also get a sense of how he feels about the Starks, the Avengers and those sorts of characters. He was one of the cornerstone characters in the comics, so I love bringing that stuff in.

"There's probably a point you could reach where you bring too much of that stuff in, because this movie absolutely lives and dies on its own. It's its own, self-contained Ant-Man origin story, it's got a beginning, a middle and an end, but I also like that it can weave in these other elements of the universe and be part of this wider world. To me, that was one of the most appealing things about doing a Marvel movie, because I think it's something we take for granted now, how the MCU works, but it really was kind of a grand experiment when it first



Paul Rudd undertook a serious fitness regime for the role.



Ant-Man sees Michael Douglas's Hank Pym play mentor to Rudd's Scott Lang.



The crazy world of Ant-Man

Fans of the *Ant-Man* comics will know that Hank Pym can be far from a hero. During a pretty controversial storyline, he actually hit his wife Janet Van Dyne (aka Wasp), making him the first high-profile wife beater of the comics world. Van Dyne divorced Pym after he became abusive, as did the Avengers.

Here are some other times Ant-Man went off the rails...

When he was part of the Avengers, Hank Pym's emotional instability caused him to feel inadequate in mind and body compared to the rest of the team. Instead of talking it out, he created a new kind of Pym Particle that turned him into Giant-Man.



Pym once used his incredible shrinking powers in the bedroom with Janet Van Dyne. We won't go into too much detail, but it involved shrinking down to size, climbing into 'something', performing various 'activities', and then making his way back to Janet's face by scurrying up her cleavage. It was quite strange.



The second incarnation of Ant-Man, Scott Lang, is an ex-con with a shady past. Those aren't the best credentials for a superhero, but a stint in prison helped Lang see the error of his ways and start using his, ahem, certain set of skills, to help others.



The third man to don the Ant-Man suit, Eric O'Grady, could also be a bit of a bastard. He was working as a low-level SHIELD agent when he stumbled across the suit at SHIELD headquarters. He stole it, cheated and lied his way to becoming a 'hero', and used his new guise to stalk women and steal some more. His comic-book series was called *The Irredeemable Ant-Man*, which also says a lot.



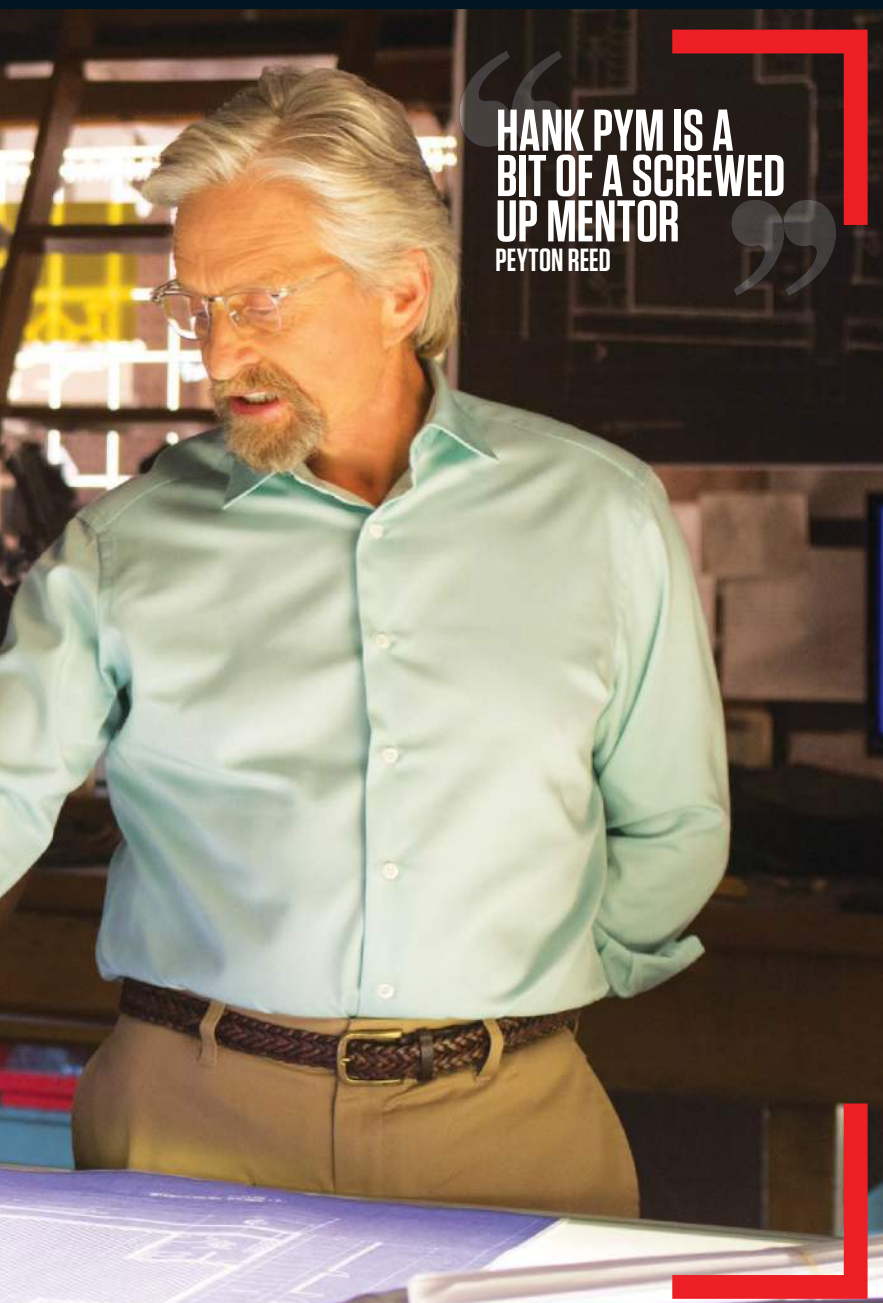
started. There was a point where they were like, 'Is this going to work?' and it absolutely worked. If you look at last year, *Winter Soldier* and *Guardians Of The Galaxy* came out. I love both those movies, and they are radically different tones, so I love that there is a cinematic universe where both of these movies can exist, be their own specific tones and have their own idiosyncrasies, but they work within the wider universe, and I think *Ant-Man* is absolutely a part of it."

A funny thing about *Ant-Man* is that for a long time, nobody really knew where it was going to fit into the MCU. It could have been Phase 2; that would have made sense. Conversely, with it being a story about a new character that we haven't seen on the big screen before, it could also comfortably kick-start the upcoming string of Phase 3 movies. Either way, the story

is definitely going to be affected by the events of *Avengers: Age Of Ultron*.

"I think you'll see certain characters and their attitudes about what's gone on before, and that's one of the fun things [about *Ant-Man*]," says Reed. "But at the same time, Scott Lang is very different. He doesn't have superpowers. He's just a normal guy. He's made some terrible decisions in his life, he's coming out of prison, and he's just a guy looking to get his life back on track. He's divorced, has a daughter that he hasn't seen, and he's dying to get back into his daughter's life, but he's also tempted by some things that may not be in his best interests. Then he comes across this suit, and he gets sucked into this world that's a much larger world and a much more Marvel world that he did not know existed. So that's kind of a fun thing about this movie: it's a different way into this universe of superheroes.

HANK PYM IS A BIT OF A SCREWED UP MENTOR
PEYTON REED



"It's funny, because working here, you each have these hallways, and everyone's on their mission to get their movie done, so I'll pass by Scott Derrickson in the morning: 'How's *Doctor Strange* going?' And then James Gunn will pop around, and he's working on *Guardians 2*, and I'll run into Joss [Whedon], who was deep into post-production on *Age Of Ultron* as we were in post-production on *Ant-Man*, and Joss quite frankly would look pretty exhausted – you've seen the movie, it's a gigantic movie. It's kind of fun to go to work in the morning and see all these people who are working on their specific part... It's been nice, because it's very rare that directors get to hang out together, so when you do get these moments in the hallway, you can talk, share war stories and support each other, I love that. It's awesome."

THE FACT THAT ANT-MAN IS A RELATIVELY UNKNOWN SUPERHERO COMPARED TO THE BIG MCU PLAYERS LIKE IRON MAN, CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THOR GAVE REED and the production team more wiggle room and freedom to make him into what they wanted him to be.

"Because Ant-Man is a lesser-known character, people come to it with less pre-conceived notions," he admits. "And probably if they have any notions of Ant-Man, it's 'Okay, wait a second, he can shrink? What's his other power? He can control ants?! How can that be cool? How can that possibly be useful in any situation that a superhero may face?' One of the coolest things about the movie, and the thing I'm most proud of, is it absolutely shows you how, when properly mobilised, these armies of ants can do some real damage.

"I like any science fiction movie that has an internal structure and internal politics. As a kid, I was a big *Planet Of The Apes* fan, and I was obsessed with the political hierarchy of the orang-utans, chimpanzees and gorillas. I was so obsessed with that politics. *Ant-Man*'s version of that is we introduce all these ant characters. There's the carpenter ants, the bullet ants, the crazy ants, the fire ants – they're all real ants that exist in nature, and they all have very specific skill sets. One of the things about this movie is how Hank and Scott are able to use these skill sets and amass these ants for various elements of the heist, and I think that's one of the secret elements of the movie."

Back when Edgar Wright was still directing, when *Ant-Man* news got



It's fair to say that *Ant-Man* will be like no other superhero movie you've seen before.

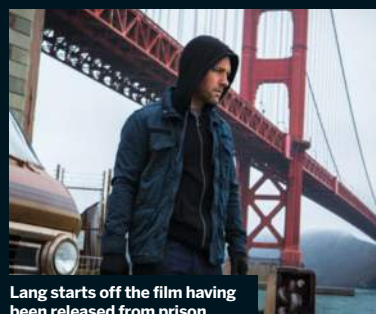


Dusty

ANT TESTIMONIAL

"I walked in on him and his wife once. I can never un-see it."

Adversarial duties are taken on by Corey Stoll as Darren Cross.



Lang starts off the film having been released from prison.



Redemption will be a core theme – for both Hank and Scott.

presenting a different version of Paul Rudd; he's still the charming Paul Rudd and the funny Paul Rudd, but he's also a character who you meet at the beginning of the movie, coming out of prison. And so Paul has a very different rugged quality to him in the movie as well, and I think that's going to be cool for audiences to see.

"The top characters were already cast when I arrived on the movie, and it would have been disastrous if the casting had been terrible, but fortunately it was really great. You have Paul, Evangeline Lilly [Hope Van Dyne] and Corey Stoll [Darren Cross, aka villain Yellowjacket], and Michael Douglas [Hank Pym]. To me, the chance to work with Michael was amazing... When we were working on the rewrites, Michael and I agreed that we wanted to bring out a little of the grey area

of the Hank Pym character. In the comic-books, Hank is an extremely complicated character, and we wanted to bring out some of that... Michael has made an incredible career [around playing] morally ambiguous characters that have a lot of grey areas... Hank Pym is a mentor, but he's a little bit of a screwed up mentor. He clearly bears the mark of his time as Ant-Man, and he's motivated, in no small part, by guilt. He has a little bit of a quick temper, and it's interesting to see a character who's supposed to be a mentor to this other guy, but he has some serious issues of his own that he has to deal with... For me, to see Michael Douglas and to be able to direct Michael Douglas as Hank Pym was fantastic."

For a while, one of Ant-Man's main selling points was the fact that it was going to be an Edgar Wright film. His

fans excited rather than angry in the YouTube comments section, most were pretty psyched about the universally liked Paul Rudd being cast as the film's star. When Reed finally joined the film last year, he was pretty psyched too.

"I'd known Paul for a couple of years, but we'd never worked together. But Paul, as I'm sure you've seen in the photographs, got into insanely great physical shape for the role; rippling six pack abs, and also did fight training for the role. One of the things that excites me most about [the movie] is

Silver

ANT TESTIMONIAL

"He's all right, but I think he's been stealing my lunch from the communal fridge."

and Joe Cornish's screenplay was a source of excitement, but sadly a lot of people decided they had beef with the film once he left. When Reed joined as director, Rudd and *Anchorman*'s Adam McKay rewrote the script. But how similar is Reed's movie to Wright and Cornish's original screenplay?

"The whole notion of [Wright and Cornish's] idea of making it a heist movie structure, that's still absolutely part of the DNA of the movie," reveals Reed. "So the basic heist structure is the same, but we changed a great deal. We've tried to keep the spirit of the movie, but in the evolution of it, there were things where Adam McKay and Paul came aboard to write the new draft, and Adam, who we all know is hilarious, is also a massive Marvel comics nerd as well. Adam and I had some ideas of the movie that were like, 'It would be cool to bring this in,' and 'What if we also did this, and what if when we get to the third act instead of doing this,' and it all fed off itself."

AS EACH TRAILER HAS BEEN UNVEILED, THE FAN REACTION HAS BEEN PROGRESSIVELY MORE POSITIVE. HOWEVER, SOME WERE STILL UPSET ABOUT THE LACK OF WASP.

"It's interesting, and this goes back to when the first *Iron Man* and *Ant-Man* scripts were written – probably 2007 or 2008 – when Edgar and Joe first started writing, that was the decision they made when they started writing the script: that they wanted to do more of a Hank Pym/Scott Lang mentor/pupil thing that had a heist element to it. And I know that because Edgar and Joe were developing it for so long, there was a point where Joss wanted to maybe include Ant-Man and Wasp in the original *Avengers*, but they couldn't because of what was being developed for *Ant-Man*, so that's just sort of the way it worked out, but I would urge fans of Ant-Man and Wasp to go see the movie, and I'll leave it at that!"

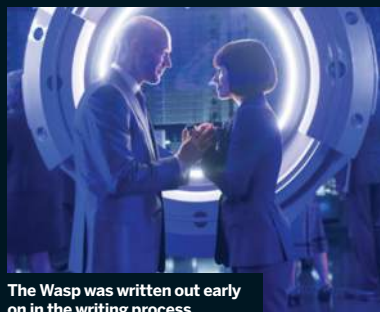
Though production has been rocky, *Ant-Man* will most likely do well at the box office; after all, it's an MCU movie, how could it not? And it won't be long until Rudd gets a second airing, what with him already confirmed to be appearing in *Captain America: Civil War*.

"It's been an exciting thing, certainly for myself, and also for Paul, that Ant-Man is going to be a part of this ongoing universe, and when you see the movie, I think you're going to come out of *Ant-Man* saying, 'I want to see more of this guy, I like this character and I like

I CAN'T WAIT FOR THE FANS TO DISCOVER THIS CHARACTER

PEYTON REED

Former *Lost* star Evangeline Lilly plays Hank's daughter, Hope.

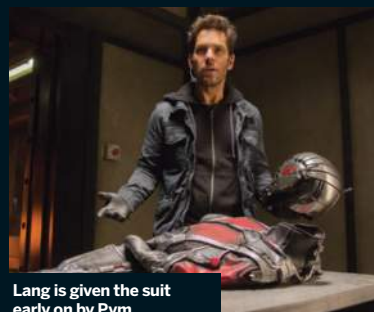


The Wasp was written out early on in the writing process.

his take on everything that's going on around him.' There's clearly a lot more to explore with this character, not only when you see the movie you'll feel that way, but also knowing his history in the comics, there's so much to explore with these [guys], with Scott Lang, with Hank Pym, and with Hope as well.

"I can't wait for fans to discover this character. That's one of the things to me about not doing a sequel... I have the privilege, really, of creating this new character, and this cinematic version of this comic-book character that the die-hard fans know, but the general public at large probably doesn't know. To me, it's like, 'Come and sit down for a two-hour period, go on this ride and experience this movie.' 🐜

Ant-Man will be released on Blu-ray and DVD shortly.



Lang is given the suit early on by Pym.

Director Peyton Reed is hopeful about the chances of a sequel.



Prince

ANT TESTIMONIAL

"He's great! He's like the drone I never had. We're all one big, happy superorganism."

Nash

ANT TESTIMONIAL

"We used to be really good mates, but then he tried to ride me into battle once and it got a bit weird between us."

「MARS」

We spoke to producer and long-time Ridley Scott collaborator Mark Huffam about bringing self-published phenomenon The Martian to the big screen...

「ROVER」





Great films that bring people together are a rare thing; unifying science fiction films even more elusive still. Especially in recent years, futuristic tales have

predominantly taken on a bleak outlook, beset by one dystopia after another. *The Martian* seems determined to buck that trend, exhibiting the can-do spirit that the genre seems to have been missing of late.

The premise sees astronaut Mark Watney (Matt Damon) being marooned on Mars when he is separated from his colleagues and presumed dead after a particularly violent sandstorm. It isn't long before mission control back on Earth become aware of his survival, in the process spawning an Earth-wide mission to bring him back home – with Watney himself calling upon his extensive survivalist skills, going to a multitude of ingenious lengths to ensure his own survival.

“It is a tale of survival, teamwork, man against the elements and looking after our own, but in a place that is miles away from where anyone can help him,” summarises producer Mark Huffam. “It’s the ultimate survival movie.”

Rather aptly, *The Martian*’s own story is one of success against the odds. Having initially been unsuccessful in his attempts

to sell it to a major publisher, author Andy Weir persevered nonetheless, uploading it chapter by chapter to his website. By popular demand, he self-published it as an eBook on Amazon in September 2012, where it subsequently shot to the top of the sci-fi bestseller chart, before being purchased by publishers Crown for a six-figure sum.

From there, it went stratospheric. 20th Century Fox optioned the film rights, initially bringing *Cabin In The Woods*’ Drew Goddard on board to direct and Simon Kinberg to adapt the screenplay. However, with Goddard departing to direct the now-cancelled *Sinister Six* movie, *Blade Runner* and *Aliens* director Ridley Scott was approached. “Fox sent Ridley the script, he loved it, and that was that,” recalls Huffam, whose own involvement was confirmed, having previously worked with Scott on *Prometheus*, *The Counselor* and *Exodus: Gods & Kings*.

Joined on the producing side by fellow Scott collaborator Michael Schaefer and *Deadpool* executive producer Aditya Sood, production on *The Martian* began in earnest. Filming on the sets took place in Budapest, Hungary, while the exterior shots of Mars are represented by the extremely otherworldly-looking Wadi Rum in Jordan, which Huffam describes as “an extraordinary place.” He further elaborates, “Ridley loves filming on location. He thrives on the challenge that the elements throw at him – there’s nothing like a sandstorm to add a little excitement!”

In a film that presents these kind of on-set challenges, you need a game cast, and *The Martian* certainly has that in abundance. Leading the ensemble is Matt Damon, whose involvement didn’t require a lot of persuading. “Matt Damon was involved from the get-go,” says Huffam. “He was the first one who was on board – after that the rest of the cast started falling into place. It helped that the script was fabulous, and that we had Ridley directing it. Matt and Ridley between them proved an irresistible attraction for the rest of the cast.”

And what a cast it is. Playing Watney's fellow crew members we have Jessica Chastain (*Crimson Peak*), Michael Pena (*Ant-Man*), Kate Mara (*Fantastic Four*), Sebastian Stan (*Captain America: The Winter Soldier*) and Aksel Hennie (*Hercules*), with ground control including Jeff Daniels, Kristen Wiig and Chiwetel Ejiofor. It's easy to see why they were attracted to this project – an acclaimed novel populated by an award-winning production team, possessing themes that anyone can identify with.

Huffam acknowledges *Castaway* and *Apollo 13* as touchstones, but another reference point is one that is more personal, considering that he worked on it (and the fact that it shares a lead actor). "Man against the elements was very much our ultimate blueprint for the story. You have one man attempting to survive against the odds – the steely determination of Mark Watney to survive, no matter what the impossible odds are – and then there's the help from NASA and the other crew members, who get together and try to bring him home – not

too dissimilar from *Saving Private Ryan*, coincidentally! It's a huge, collective attempt to save one person, for all the right reasons."

One of the selling points was its purported adherence to scientific accuracy. Indeed, Weir's background helped. The son of a particle physicist, his father's career path rubbed off on his own interests, with Weir heavily researching mechanics, astronomy and the history of spacecraft in preparation for the book. Further enhancing the film's scientific kudos, NASA was brought on board to provide advice and reference points on all space-related matters – something Huffam greatly enjoyed being a part of.

"I totally loved it!" remembers Huffam. "Arthur Max, our production designer, went to NASA, where he started speaking to the people who had designed their spaceships. In the first week we were working from these designs. NASA were fantastic collaborators from the get go. They loved the book, the script and the design work. They were extremely efficient in turning round our numerous questions and requests. Bert Ulrich, our NASA liaison, was

pretty amazing at dealing with our demands and requests. It has been very beneficial to have such a good working relationship with NASA."

Even with the benefit of having one of cinema's most acclaimed directors, some talented writers, an all-star cast and the US government's very own space agency on board, there were still challenges, chief of which being the conundrum that every director looking to adapt a popular book faces: choosing what to keep, and how to arrange elements that might be problematic when translated to the screen. Large swathes of the novel comprise Watney by himself, talking into a monitor. Coupled with the novel's science-heavy exposition, and adapting the novel wholesale becomes an obviously bad idea.

Huffam mentions getting around the first issue by telling parts of Watney's narrative from "several viewpoints." When asked

"Man against the elements was very much the blueprint for our story"

Mark Huffam

The *Martian* sees astronaut Mark Watney (Matt Damon) stranded on the Red Planet.



Watney with his fellow Ares 3 crew members: Lewis (Jessica Chastain), Beck (Sebastian Stan), Johanssen (Kate Mara) and Vogel (Aksel Hennie).



Kristen Wiig stars as NASA head of PR, Annie Montrose.

One Step Beyond

Astronaut Tracy Caldwell Dyson on advising *The Martian*

How did you get involved with *The Martian*?

I got notified by our public affairs office that Jessica Chastain was going to spend the day learning about NASA, and they wanted a female commander type to walk through the mock-up training facility with her. I spent a half a day with her basically walking through our training facility and talking about life on board a space station, and she just asked a ton of questions.

So did Jessica basically want to know everything?

She wanted to know everything from certain ways that you control your body in the weightlessness environment to what's the role of the commander like on board the space station, to the things that I would wear while I was on board and what kind of activities. I was really impressed with the questions, she was very thoughtful, and you could tell that she had been thinking well before she got there about her role.

Did you find that it was as accurate as it was made out?

Yeah, I would say that trying to put myself decades ahead now and how the technology has improved, I do. I think that it was well thought out and accurate. I have to admit, I'm a scientist but I wouldn't have known the answers to all of those problems he was solving, but the things that I did know I felt it was accurate enough to earn my respect and keep me reading.

Are you able to enjoy films about space without being too critical?

It is a mix of emotions whenever I do see space movies, because I get wrapped up in the story just like anyone else would and don't pick it apart for the things that I know. But sometimes when things are very obvious, then it catches my attention, and I have to remind myself that it's a movie and focus on the story.

Is there one defining moment from your time as an astronaut that has stayed with you?

I think that one of the most unforgettable experience was doing my space walk. And the first time that I went out in the space suit and experienced that for the first time where it was just me in the suit in the vacuum of space, and there was nothing, literally except an atmosphere between me and our planet moving at 17,500 miles an hour beneath me. I could look down at my toes and see mountain ranges and continents go by. I also had a job to do while I was out there, don't forget! So it was one of the most bizarre experiences I have ever had.

what the biggest challenge of filming was, he jokingly responds, "Getting to Mars was tricky, but we managed it!" Even so, he acknowledges the traditional problems of turning a book into a screenplay. "You're making a sci-fi/science fantasy film, so you've got to have some license, but we wanted it to be as accurate as it could possibly be. And then you have a whole book that you have to cut down into a two-hour script. That I would say was the toughest element of working on the film."

Judging by what we've seen, it looks like those involved with *The Martian* have gone a long way towards meeting these challenges head-on. They look to have created a film that is simultaneously forward-looking, while harping back to more universal themes. "It is about having hope, and the surprising things people can do when they team up together." He summarises the root of its appeal: "great performances, amazing visuals, disco music and a lot of humour!"

The Martian is currently showing in cinemas and will be released on Blu-ray next year.

Watney draws on his survivalist skills – which happen to include botany.

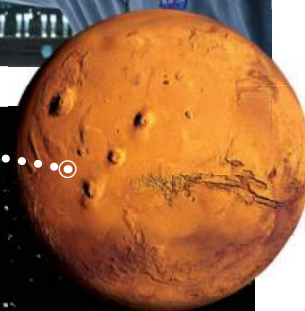


The Martian follows very much in the tradition of spacefaring adventures like *Apollo 13*.

Damon was the first choice for the role of Watney.

Mars Attacks

How other big-screen expeditions to the Red Planet have gone pear-shaped



1 Mission To Mars (2000)

What Went Wrong: Vortex storm destroys their ship.
How They Escaped: By hanging tight in a greenhouse until they were rescued.



2 Stranded (2001)

What Went Wrong: An error with the altimeter causes them to crash.
How They Escaped: They find a convenient valley with oxygen and water to bide their time in.



3 Flight To Mars (1951)

What Went Wrong: A meteor storm damages the landing gear and forces a crash landing.
How They Escaped: The natives help repair their ship and let them leave.



4 Ghosts Of Mars (2001)

What Went Wrong: The spirits of Mars' former inhabitants start possessing and killing everyone.
How They Escaped: By killing them right back.

25 YEARS AFTER BATMAN,
MICHAEL KEATON FINALLY GETS
BACK INTO THE SUPER SUIT –
WELL, KIND OF. WE TALKED TO
THE CAST AND CREW OF THE
AWARD-WINNING, SUPER HIT...

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF BIRDMAN



BIRDMAN IS UNLIKE ANYTHING YOU'VE SEEN BEFORE. THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GRAND STATEMENT, BUT IT'S TRUE. IT'S A SUPERHERO MOVIE THAT ISN'T a superhero movie, and a brilliantly dark comedy that should come with a large existential crisis warning label. It doesn't make sense, but it also somehow does.

It's a smart, slick and thoughtful film about the human condition that also slays with gags involving birdcalls and budgie smugglers, and punchlines like "smells like balls". But the combination appears to be a winning one, as it has been commended by critics everywhere since its US release in October.

Unbelievably, *Birdman* is acclaimed director Alejandro González Iñárritu's first venture into comedy. His previous features – *Amores Perros*, *21 Grams*, *Babel* and *Biutiful* – were all well received, but they were also pretty heavy on drama, so comedy was almost entirely uncharted territory for the filmmaker. As if only to make the project even more difficult, Iñárritu decided that he wanted to make the film look like it was one long, continuous shot.

The idea was an ambitious one, and posed a fair few logistical issues for the crew, but they believe it ultimately paid off. Nicholas Jacobone, one of the film's writers, says Iñárritu jumped into the project with both feet.

"The first ideas for *Birdman* were more about form than story," says Jacobone. "The first thing he told us was that he wanted to do a comedy in one continuous shot, and that he wanted to use just one location and follow the main character along this fixed location. And he thought that the location could be a Broadway theatre. Those were the first clues he gave us for this new film, which was very confusing for us coming from *Biutiful* (Iñárritu, Jacobone and *Birdman* writer Armando Bo's first collaboration). Imagine, Alejandro wanted to do a comedy in one shot, everything sounded like this huge, strange – I will not say 'mistake', because it was very intriguing – but if you think of a comedy and you think of one-shot narration, they are even like a contradiction in themselves. But it was more about that: more about form than story."

The concept was even more difficult to execute from a technical angle, as the crew constantly had to find ways of getting around problems with timing and space. "At the beginning it was frightening for me, hoping it would make sense, because I knew that everything I put on the page it was going

to be there at the end on screen,” says Giacobone. “We had to be very careful about the importance of each word on the page, and also it was very difficult to develop the transitions between scenes, how to keep the pace forward, how to avoid dragging those sort of moments where nothing is happening, have the story move forward. I mean, the whole *Birdman* thing was very scary for us at the beginning with the screenplay, and also for the actors, because they were doing eight-minute shots and takes, and if you ruin one line then you will ruin half an hour of work... I would say that we sort of learnt how to make this movie while we were doing it – which is not the right way to do things, but when it works it can be fascinating.”

Production designer Kevin Thompson says: “For me, it was like Alejandro’s plan from the beginning was to make the movie appear like it was filmed in that one continuous shot. That led to a lot of technical challenges and required us to invent things spontaneously on set so we could change the movement of the camera. We abandoned certain traditional methods of designing a back-stage set, and we left the set to organically grow around the action of the movie.



“For example, we would make the corridors the length they needed to be for a certain dialogue scene, and the speed that the actors walked. Then where they would stop and have a conversation, we created an area that had more interesting backgrounds and things like that. So the set itself evolved from the action of the rehearsals and the ability for the camera to move where it needed to move to shoot it, which we didn’t really know until the last minute sometimes. Even on the day of shooting we’d be changing the set around and moving things.”

TAKING ON HIS FIRST LEADING ROLE IN YEARS, MICHAEL KEATON PLAYS RIGGAN THOMSON, AN AGING ACTOR ON A MEANDERING ROAD LEADING TO A

full-blown mental breakdown. When we first meet Riggan, he’s at the start of that road and beginning to feel like nothing really matters. He starred in the multi-billion dollar *Birdman* franchise 20 years ago, but since flying under the radar as an actor for a while, people are already forgetting him.

The broad comparisons between the former Batman and his character are less than subtle, and a stream of

superhero jokes follow at Keaton’s expense. But if there ever was a victorious comeback, Keaton’s is it. *Birdman* has so far only been released in the US and Mexico, but there’s already a lot of awards buzz surrounding both him and the film.

Screenwriter Armando Bo is filled with praise for the actor. “I think he has something that is almost magical in a way,” he tells us. “What’s magical is that when you see this movie you can’t imagine anybody else. I think that he’s an amazing actor. People love him, so it’s really positive for the movie, and I can’t see this movie with another actor. I can’t imagine it. It plays with reality, what is real, what is not, and I think he makes that really, really powerful... Alejandro made a great choice, and now I see that he was the only one.”

“[Keaton] was incredibly professional and hard-working, and physically on his game,” Thompson agrees. “He was so impressive, because these actors really went through tests, doing these long, long scenes without the crutch of knowing that they could freshen their makeup for the close-up. With these actors it was such a combination of doing a theatre piece and doing a movie. He was incredibly impressive – a really

Being Alejandro González Iñárritu

The director tells us why *Birdman* may be his most personal movie

“Basically, [*Birdman*] came from this struggle and battle that we all have with our ego. In this case, in a personal battle... I have just turned 50 last year. It’s just that when you realise... you make kind of a revision of the priorities that you have been dealing with in your life. And some things are missing, some things are great, and some things are not so great. I have been just going in through retrospection about how the mechanics of my own perception have been.

“I thought it was incredibly interesting what I have been learning to be aware of how the ego can work. In my case, in the creative process my ego has always been a huge inquisitor, a tyrant kind of dictator that is very rude and sometimes can be very misleading. Because sometimes when I’m doing something I say, ‘Oh, this is great, this is fantastic! You’re a genius!’ And then 20 minutes later I feel like a dead jellyfish and I say, ‘You are stupid asshole. What you think is piece of shit. Nobody will care about it.’ So it’s a constant bipolar relation of my process that I thought ‘Well, the ego is a tyrant,’ and I thought it would be a cool thing to portray in a film.”

Michael Keaton takes the lead as washed-up actor Riggan Thomson.



brilliant sort of equalitarian with the crew and respectful of everybody. He has very little ego, and he worked like a stealth actor. I was really impressed with him. I thought he was fantastic."

The long-shot style sometimes caused the actors to have to perform up to 15 pages of dialogue in one go while also hitting choreographed marks. It could get quite complicated for all involved at times.

"The character is really one of the most difficult things I've done," says Keaton.

"Not in terms of the character necessarily, but in terms of how the film was made... Within sometimes 30 or 40 seconds, you have to surf a lot of different emotions and be part of this giant picture. Because this picture is always shifting and moving, it's got so many levels. So therefore it was really, really difficult, but I like that."

The symmetry between Keaton and Riggan's career is apparent, but strangely, Keaton has said that the character was the most unlike himself than any he has ever played.

BECAUSE THIS PICTURE IS ALWAYS SHIFTING AND MOVING IT'S GOT SO MANY LEVELS

MICHAEL KEATON

"I think he made the character his own, and it was just fantastic to see him turn into Riggan, which is crazy because the main character has nothing to do with him, personality wise," Giacobone tells us. "They just share this sort of past, this superhero past, but the work he did was just fantastic. I mean, I am so happy that he's the one doing it, because every time I see him I'm

amazed. It was a crazy thing to do, it was a very intense journey, but at the same time the way it was shot [made it] very difficult."

The main themes explored

by *Birdman* include ego and existence, which seems pretty bleak subject matter for a superhero-based comedy, but the filmmakers drew from their own experiences in order to make a convincing case.

"It's fascinating because it's us," Giacobone tells us. "It's going back and forth over time between, 'What I'm doing is something great and meaningful', and then suddenly the same thing is just, 'Who cares? Who needs another movie?'

Who needs another book?' I mean, it's just meaningless, so it's this constant fight... That's why you need to have this sort of capacity of ignorance in a sense, because at one point you just have to let go and do it if you're meant to do it, and there is no true justification for it. It's just an urge, a personal urge, or something like that."

Though the title and the basic plot suggests otherwise, *Birdman* – though still about a superhero – isn't a superhero movie. The super suits and powers are buried under mountains of angst, satire, self-evaluation and artistic filming techniques.

Edward Norton, who stars opposite Keaton, and is no stranger to the superhero movie, having been Marvel's Hulk before Mark Ruffalo took the reins, says: "Michael [Keaton] and I went over to New York Comic-Con to do a panel. Right before we went on, I looked at Michael and said, 'Do you think this is the ultimate bait-and-switch that's ever been pulled on a Comic-Con audience? Can you imagine if you go to this actually thinking it's a superhero movie?'"



Birdman is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.

Emma Stone also features as Riggan's recovering drug-addict daughter Sam.



Edward Norton stars alongside Keaton as Broadway actor Mike.



The parallels between *Birdman* and Keaton's *Batman* are clear from the off.

Director of Photography Emmanuel Lubezki with Alejandro González Iñárritu and Keaton.



Superhero stage shows

Birdman isn't the first vigilante to take to the stage

SPIDER-MAN: TURN OFF THE DARK

Music and lyrics by Bono and The Edge, book by Julie Taymor, Glen Berger and Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa

This ambitious *Spider-Man* show contained highly technical stunts and aerial combat scenes. It's no surprise that it holds the record for the most expensive Broadway production in history. It made a fair bit of money but reviews we mixed, and the show's run concluded at the start of 2014. It featured songs called *A Boy Falls From The Sky* and *A Freak Like Me (Needs Company)*.



IT'S A BIRD... IT'S A PLANE... IT'S SUPERMAN

Music by Charles Strouse, lyrics by Lee Adams, book by David Newman and Robert Benton

This stage show starring the Man of Steel started its debut run on Broadway in 1966. It has since been performed in New York, Dallas and LA, and scored its own ABC TV special in 1975. Musical numbers include *It's Superman*, *Pow! Bam! Zonk!* and *It's Superman (Reprise)*.



HOLY MUSICAL B@MAN!

Music by Nick Gage and Scott Lamps, lyrics by Nick Gage, book by Nick Lang and Matt Lang

In this lively Mickey-take of the superhero genre, *Batman* sets out to make a super friend when he realises fighting crime is no fun when you're alone. It was created and performed by the stage troupe *Starkid*, who are also known for their hit *Harry Potter Musical* which starred *Glee*'s Darren Criss as Harry Potter.





HOLDING OUT FOR A

HERO

HAVING INFUSED DISNEY'S FAMILY-FRIENDLY THEMES AND BUBBLEGUM-BRIGHT VISUALS INTO YET ANOTHER COLOURFUL CADRE OF MARVEL SUPERHEROES, BIG HERO 6 KICK-STARTED 2015 IN STYLE. DIRECTORS DON HALL AND CHRIS WILLIAMS TALK US THROUGH THE HOUSE OF MOUSE'S FIRST FORAY INTO BIG-SCREEN HEROICS...

EVER SINCE ITS ACQUISITION, MARVEL STUDIOS HAS SERVED ITS DISNEY CORPORATE PARENTS WELL, FROM *AVENGERS ASSEMBLE* AND *IRON MAN 3* TO *Thor: The Dark World* and *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, with an additional slate of films that will fill out the rest of the decade and beyond. With the release of *Big Hero 6*, the question is whether or not they are going to be able to return the favour.

Inspired by the Marvel comic series of the same name, *Big Hero 6* is the first property

from the house that Stan Lee helped build to be produced in CG animation, and as such it seems to be in safe hands considering Disney's track record in recent years, including *Bolt*, *Wreck-It Ralph* and *Frozen*.

Big Hero 6 focuses on robotics prodigy Hiro Hamada (voiced by Ryan Potter), who learns to harness his genius – thanks to his brilliant brother Tadashi (Daniel Henney) and their like-minded friends, adrenaline junkie GoGo Tomago (Jamie Chung), neatnik Wasabi (Damon Wayans

Jr), chemistry whiz Honey Lemon (Genesis Rodriguez) and fanboy Fred (TJ Miller).

Tadashi creates the robot Baymax (Scott Adsit), whose primary function is to take care of people. However, when events take a devastating turn, Hiro is catapulted into the middle of a dangerous plot unfolding in the fictional city of San Fransokyo. Determined to save the day, he turns to Baymax, and transforms his friends into a band of high-tech heroes. Together, they go up against supervillain Yokai.

The film is directed by Don Hall and Chris Williams, who respectively helmed the 2011 big-screen version of *Winnie The Pooh* and the aforementioned *Bolt*. *Big Hero 6* is essentially a hybrid of both sensibilities.

"There is some DNA that's similar in the sense that a movie is always going to reflect the director at some point," says Williams, "and this was always, by Donny's design, going to be a movie with a lot of heart, but with action as well. I love action movies and great action scenes, so I think both in *Bolt* and *Big Hero 6* there's a very comedic and playful tone, but at the same time there are some really killer action scenes, which hopefully can stand up to the best you've ever seen."

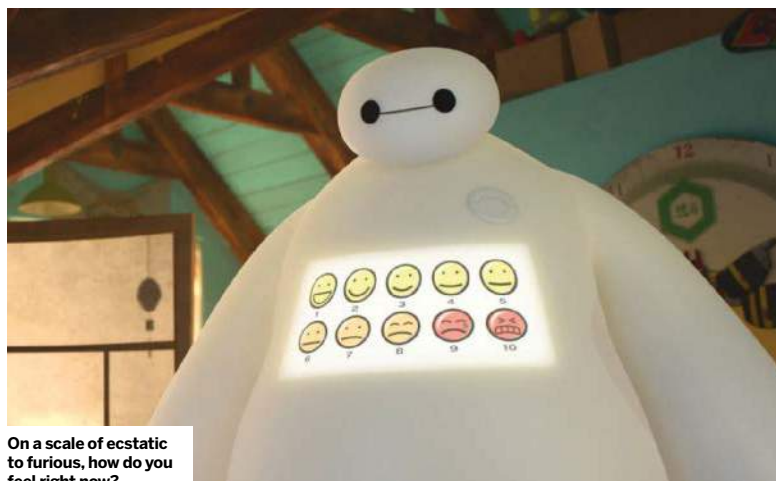
Hall adds that the project began with what he calls a pretty "typical" conversation with Disney's John Lasseter (originally of Pixar) following *Winnie The Pooh*, when he was asked what he would like to do next. Tapping into a childhood passion, he turned to Marvel Comics, and thought it would be ideal to combine that passion with his love for Disney animation.

"We found *Big Hero 6*," he says, "and Marvel was super enthusiastic about us taking it and running with it. From the earliest discussions, it was, 'Don't worry about setting this in our universe; create your own world for the story to live.' They got very excited about the idea of San Fransokyo, and were along for the ride, just like all the other directors and story-people here. Chris came on to storyboard, and he storyboarded one of the key scenes that happens in the middle of act two that really starts to establish the relationship between Hiro and Baymax. At a certain point, this movie became almost unmanageable for one person, so he was the perfect person to bring on as co-director, because I knew he had the movie in his heart and in his head, and would be a great companion to ride it through to the end."

For his part, Williams went through something similar on *Bolt*, ultimately bringing Byron Howard onto that film as co-director – simply because he couldn't be everywhere he needed to be at all



Baymax is programmed to look after people – and apparently animals too.



On a scale of ecstatic to furious, how do you feel right now?

Supervillain Yokai looks to be a suitably sinister creation.



CG vs 2D ANIMATION

Where does traditional animation go now?

The more successful CG-animated films like *Big Hero 6*, *Wreck-It Ralph* and *Frozen* are, the less likely it is that studios will continue to create 2D (or 'traditional') animated films. It's a theory that *Big Hero 6* co-directors Don Hall and Chris Williams don't necessarily want to embrace.

"I hope that's not the case," says Williams. "They have their own strengths, and we grew up loving the Walt Disney 2D-animated movies. I think they guided our choices and led Donny and I here. When you look at some of those classic movies, they had a huge influence on the audience and popular culture. I do hope we'll be seeing more of them in the future."

As to the widespread appeal of CGI, he continues, "It certainly opens up, from a cinematic standpoint, a lot of avenues in terms of what you can do with camerawork and what you can do with lighting. There's a lot of cinematic potential that comes with CG animation.

It seems to have all the strengths of live action, but animation is still an artwork that's about caricature and simplifying and finding the specific acting choices. To be able to draw from the best of live action and the best from traditional animation, I think that's why CGI has become so popular."

States Hall, "I'm happy to say we're in a place and time when so many studios are doing such great work, and so many great artists are pouring their talent into computer animation and computer-animated films. I think we're in the middle of a creative zenith right now. Every movie is trying to live up to such a high bar, and I'm really proud to be working in animation now. When I see the list of 'Best Animated Feature' nominees, this list consists of just incredible movies."

Wasabi

About: The most 'normal' of the bunch, Wasabi is a heavily built neat-freak who is an expert at laser cutting. It's only fitting that he has laser blades on his gloves.



MEET THE BIG HERO GANG

Unsurprisingly, there's six of them. Here's the lowdown...

• Honey Lemon

About: The resident chemistry whizz at the Institute. Her glass is always half-full, with a genuine 'mad scientist' vibe about her.

• Baymax

About: An inflatable robot built by Hiro's brother Tadashi. Design to be a healthcare companion, his main mindset is to help others around him.

• Fred

About: Not as science-minded as the rest of the line-up, Fred is labelled as the fanboy of the group. He is a comic-book fan and mascot for the Institute.

• Hiro

About: A 14-year-old robotics prodigy who has already graduated from high school. After losing his brother he finds Baymax, who quickly becomes his trusty companion.

• GoGo Tomago

About: A woman of few words and inspired by bicycle messengers, GoGo Tomago is developing electromagnetic wheel axles at the San Fransokyo Institute of Technology.



times. “*Big Hero 6* is a movie with a lot of characters,” he says. “It’s a big movie and very ambitious, and he asked me to come on and co-direct, which I was very excited to do. I love these characters, I love the idea of this film, I like the problem-solving of a movie that is taking on a lot. It’s a boy-and-his-dog or a boy-and-his-robot story, but it’s also a superhero origin story. Tonally, there are some very dramatic and emotional bits, but there’s also at times a very goofy and playful tone that I love, so the problem-solving of having all those things come together was something very attractive to me.”

At the heart of the film is the relationship between Hiro and Baymax, the impression being that the former has the tragedy of losing his brother, but it would seem that by the end of the movie he will in essence have a surrogate brother in Baymax.

“Generally, that’s the arc of it,” agrees Hall, “and thematically we’re dealing with loss in a very direct way as far as it’s not something that happened in the distant past or in flashback. It happens in real time in the movie, and you’re watching a character deal with the loss of his best friend and older brother, and the relationship that develops with the brother’s robot.”

Adds Williams, “There’s a really powerful dynamic that was part of the original pitch that Donny did here, which is the idea of a boy who loses his brother, and without him he’s lost. He’s adrift. But then he discovers his older brother’s creation – this robot Baymax – and Baymax embodies so much of what was really good about his brother. Baymax is there to fill that void and become the surrogate older brother, and there’s a really nice idea in that the emotional climax of the movie comes when Hiro realises that his brother in a sense is not gone; that he can live on through Hiro and influence his

choices. That’s something I think that’s a very true – but very powerful – idea, and that’s central to this movie, which is, on the surface, a very comedic, fun movie full of all sorts of superhero action. I think there’s a really special relationship and some pretty deep emotion.”

As for the team itself, he describes its members all as being dysfunctional in one way or another. “I guess that’s because it’s more fun than watching a functional team,” Williams laughs. “For us, the team had to definitely sit on the spine of the story of a boy who has a major loss in his life and the robot who tries to heal him, and as far as the team dynamic goes, they’re all friends of Tadashi and they’re all super-smart science kids in their own right. Aside from Fred, who is more of a fanboy, they’re completely unlikely superheroes. At no point – again, aside from maybe Fred – did these guys imagine they would put on costumes and super suits and try to fight a supervillain. That was just never in their DNA, so they all come from a science background. That’s

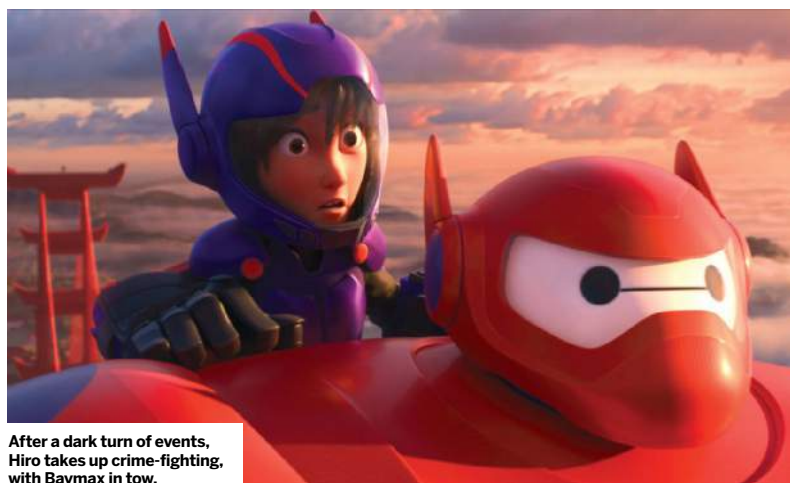
one of the things we’re kind of proud of; it’s all based on science and technology. Yes, we may have taken a few liberties with some of the tech, but we wanted to make sure it was researched and grounded in a certain reality.”

“They live in a world that is not filled with superheroes and supervillains,” Hall interjects, “so this is a very foreign and outlandish idea to them. But watching them one by one sort of embrace the notion of becoming a superhero team is a very fun part of the story.”

Elaborating on the technology aspect of the team, he details, “GoGo is kind of an adrenaline junkie, and she’s doing research into electric mag wheels attached to a bicycle, so the idea is that her physical energy gets converted into supersonic speed, and she’s dealing with low-friction or zero-friction mag wheels. Hiro takes that part and makes her sort of the vehicle; the wheels then attach to her. Honey Lemon is a

“IT’S A BOY AND HIS DOG OR A BOY AND HIS ROBOT STORY, BUT IT’S ALSO A SUPERHERO ORIGIN STORY”

CHRIS WILLIAMS



After a dark turn of events, Hiro takes up crime-fighting, with Baymax in tow.

Hiro’s genius ultimately allows his friends to become heroes with him.





Much of the promotional material up to this point has focused on Baymax.



As per what we've come to expect, the visuals look pretty impressive.



A CRY FOR CG HEROES

Could *Big Hero 6* kick-start a trend?

Prior to *Big Hero 6*, the only CG superhero movie was Pixar's *The Incredibles*, but you have to wonder – given the apparently insatiable global appetite for superhero adventures – if this film could actually pave the way for more such films.

"It's hard to say," admits co-director Don Hall. "The superhero thing has only been part of this movie to me. It is a superhero origin story, but the emotional centre of the movie is the relationship between Hiro and Baymax and the idea of this kid dealing with his loss. So I don't know if I could even categorise this as a straight superhero movie. It certainly has the DNA of that, but emotionally the threads go even deeper, so it's hard to imagine if this is the beginning of a new genre. We take stories one at a time here. It's all based on what they're passionate about, so we'll see what happens."

Adds co-director Chris Williams, "I think one of the things that's exciting now is animation is being pretty fearless in taking on any genre. I hope there will be more great animated superhero films – and more great animated fantasies and fairy tales, and rom-coms and horror. I think animation can take on anything and do it well."

chemist, so Hiro invents a sort of purse that allows her to whip up chemical concoctions on the fly, and they come out as balls that she can throw that are made up of any kind of chemical thing we can think of. Wasabi is researching into high-frequency lasers, and so he gets laser blades attached to his gloves. It's all based on their science speciality at San Fransokyo Tech."

While the duo won't reveal much about Yokai, the villain of the piece, they allow that Hiro develops incredible new technology under Tadashi's guidance that the villain steals for dark purposes.

"In the trailers," says Hall, "you see these tiny robots that are about two inches long, – they're individuals that can come together and form almost anything. They're controlled by telekinesis, and they can form almost any amorphous shape. That's something that can be used for good, and is very impressive and amazing technology, or it can be used for very destructive and dark purposes. So that's the thing they're up against ultimately."

Visually, there's no question that *Big Hero 6* is stunning, but one of the stand-out elements of Disney animation is the sheer devotion to story to ensure that it all feels genuine rather than just a fluffy adventure.

"That's most of the job, really," concurs Williams. "We have all these incredible craftsmen, and it's amazing coming to work, because there are so many talented people, but we do need to provide a great story, or what's the point? So we spend a lot of days and long hours and weekends here in the story room, just pounding on that story and challenging everything. Globally we can make every scene better, and characters and moments better. We take all of that seriously. People work so hard and sacrifice so much, and they're going to do that whether they're working on a good movie or a bad movie – a movie with a great story or a terrible story – so you really take that responsibility seriously." 

Big Hero 6 is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.



Big Hero 6 represents the latest in a line of CG-animated Disney movies.

For all the updated visuals, the themes at its heart remain very Disney.





—Welcome to—
JURASSIC WORLD

22 YEARS AFTER STEVEN SPIELBERG FIRST SHOOK THE SCREEN WITH JURASSIC PARK, THE DINOSAURS ARE ESCAPING ONCE AGAIN. STAR CHRIS PRATT, DIRECTOR COLIN TREVORROW AND MORE DISCUSS STAYING RELEVANT FOR A NEW GENERATION...

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

TO MANY, IT'S an obvious question: why should a fourth *Jurassic Park* exist? Not so obvious is the initial response from Colin Trevorrow, director of said fourth film, this summer's *Jurassic World*. "It's so that a giant corporation can make a ton of money, whether it's a good idea or not."

Not only is there a tremendous amount of truth in that statement, but as far as the filmmaker, whose sole previous credit is 2012's *Safety Not Guaranteed*, is concerned, it also serves as the inspiration to provide an answer to that question.

Trevorrow explains, "I felt like, 'Okay, maybe we can make a movie about that. Maybe the reason why they're going to go back to this island where people died and restart this theme park and take all these risks again is because we have historically shown, in all corners of our world, that we will make the same mistakes again if there's money on the table.' I found that idea compelling, coupled with the idea that yes, this is a fully operational theme park, but what that implies is that this is a world where people have grown quite comfortable with co-existing with dinosaurs. I find that we have grown kind of numb both to the natural wonders of our world and the technological wonders of our world."

Jurassic World is set 22 years after the events of Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park*. Original park creator John Hammond's dream has become a reality, with Isla Nublar serving as the home base for what has become a fully functioning theme park housing a wide variety of dinosaurs. Ten years later, it's just another tourist trap, with falling visitor numbers leading park

Claire Darling visits Owen Grady at his home to talk controlling dinosaurs.



designers and geneticists to create the Indominus Rex hybrid. Needless to say, things go horrendously wrong.

Alongside Chris Pratt as behavioural research expert Owen Grady, the other cast members include Bryce Dallas Howard (*Spider-Man 3*, *Terminator: Salvation*) as park operations manager Claire Dearing; Vincent D'Onofrio (riveting as Wilson Fisk, aka the Kingpin on Netflix's *Daredevil*) as head of security Vic Hoskins; Jake Johnson (*21 Jump Street*, *New Girl*) as the park's resident tech-head, Lowery; and BD Wong, reprising his role of Dr Henry Wu, the park's chief geneticist who led the team that created the dinosaurs in *Jurassic Park*.

Trevorrow recalls being at a zoo and looking at a gorilla that was trying to engage with someone in the crowd. His eyes turned to the person the gorilla was attempting to communicate with, who was obliviously texting a friend about something else.

"One of the first lines in the movie is, 'No one is impressed by a dinosaur anymore,'" he says. "I felt like there was something to say there. So I wanted to make a movie about how we co-exist with our animals on the planet. How we cage some and we use some for agriculture and for medicine, some for war. There's a lot of different ways that humans and animals have formed relationships over their history together. Why not throw dinosaurs into that mix and see what happens?"

One of the things that did happen was that the concept caught the attention of actor Chris Pratt. "The main thing that I think is different

Chris Pratt on set with writer/director Colin Trevorrow.



VOICES FROM THE JURASSIC ERA

Director Steven Spielberg on *Jurassic Park*

"What's interesting to me about this particular project is there is as much science as there is adventure and thrills. *Jurassic Park* is a cross between a zoo and a theme park. It's about the idea that man has been able to bring dinosaurs back to Earth millions and millions of years later and what happens when we come together. There's a big moral in this story. DNA cloning may be viable, but is it acceptable? Is it right for man to do this, or did dinosaurs have their shot millions of years ago? As to people's fascination with them, there's a quote from a Harvard psychologist who was asked why kids love dinosaurs so much. He said, 'That's easy. They're big, they're fierce... and they're dead.'"

between *Jurassic Park* and *Jurassic World* is that we're exploring a different society now," Pratt says. "Thematically, we're talking about a group of people, a generation of people, whose relationship to cutting-edge, mind-blowing science is different. It's just different now."

As an example, he points to the smartphone that's likely in your pocket, as well as everyone around you. "If you want to, you can press a button and look at live images from Mars where a land rover has landed and is driving around, gathering drilling samples and sending data back," he says. "You can look up symptoms for your sore toe online, and then you can buy a T-shirt and check in with your friends. Then you can use that same contraption to record a video of yourself and send it, so that in two seconds it will appear in the contraption in someone else's pocket."

"This is mind-blowing... but it's not," adds Pratt matter of factly. "We're kind of numb to it, you know? We're a little numb to this amazing, cutting-edge, fascinating stuff that's happening around us. That's the society we are in now, and this movie, thematically, deals with that. Since the park – *Jurassic World* – has opened, 20,000 people a day pass through its gates, but they're just bored with dinosaurs. Dinosaurs are not enough. In this world, they've been around for 20 years. They're not new and exciting the way they would have been in 1993. They're just another thing that you can see if you want."



Pratt's character Owen has, what he calls, a 'relationship' with the raptors.

Another analogy to the situation is the US space program: in 1969, the fact that man walked on the Moon was an astonishing moment in human achievement. Flash forward just a few years, and the world's fascination with the cosmos largely faded away.

"It's just human nature," Pratt shrugs. "That's what I think sets this movie apart. Enough time has happened since the events of the first movie that there's now a fresh take on the classic creature movie. There's an added element to that monster movie, but it's also holding a mirror up to society. It's definitely a whole new take – a very relevant, topical take on the franchise. In the film, the executives of *Jurassic World* are dealing with the financial loss of attendance falling off. They've introduced this newer, bigger, scarier thing to get the kids involved. Of course, that's what they're doing. They're meddling with nature now in a way to generate profit."

NEW ATTRACTION

MIXING COMMERCE WITH dinosaurs – unless you're a film studio – has never proven itself to be a sound idea. The notion of a theme park featuring cloned dinosaurs was the dream of John Hammond, which he was aggressively moving forward with before things went terribly wrong and the first wave of dinosaurs started chowing down on humans on Central America's Isla Nublar. Four years later, in 1997's *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*, after another island adventure, a T-Rex is brought back to the US by InGen, the company that took control of the project from the ailing Hammond. Naturally, it escapes and creates havoc in San Diego before being recaptured and shipped back to its island home. *Jurassic Park III*, released in 2001, effectively follows what had become the formula: people come to the island, they're pursued by dinosaurs, and those who aren't eaten manage to escape.

For his part, Trevorrow sees one particular difference between this film and what's come before: "We have a new story that allows us to create a dinosaur that can be pursued and killed. The other movies were always about people running away. The humans were never able to go on the offense, because the dinosaurs are animals. You don't want to kill these animals. They don't know what they're doing. They have instincts and they're predators, and they don't deserve any of this. But we created a villain that was wrought by our greed and our inability to both learn from the mistakes of the past and to recognise that when you raise an animal in captivity, without a mother and you feed it with a crane and it doesn't know its siblings and is a hybrid of other animals, historically all of these things have led to something that's a little crazy, and potentially nasty and murderous."

"I liked the idea," he offers, "of mankind creating a dinosaur that would be considered a synthetic, even by these other dinosaurs, which are comparatively synthetic. To allow the dinosaur we know to feel organic in comparison and to feel real. This movie is about good dinosaurs and bad dinosaurs, but it's certainly about how when something exists that is a monstrosity, that is an abnormality, that these

TO CATCH A PREDATOR

OUR GUIDE TO THE GREATEST JURASSIC CARNIVORES

★NOT TO SCALE



COMPSOGNATHUS

Height: 12 inches (1ft)
Length: 1 metre (3ft 3in)
First seen: *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*

Small but troubling. On their own they're reasonably harmless – just don't give them a reason to gang up on you.



VELOCIRAPTOR

Height: 2 metres (6ft 6in)
Length: 4 metres (13ft 1in)
First seen: *Jurassic Park*

Clever and deadly, they can communicate with each other and attack in packs – although they're pretty lethal on their own too. May team up with you if you have a motorbike.



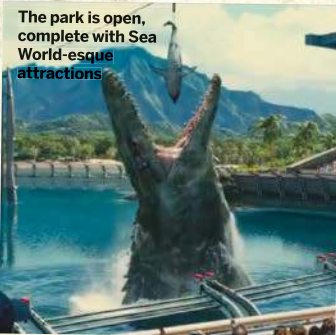
Don't let the (almost) cute looks fool you; they spit, and it's not nice. Not the kind of dinosaur you'd like to meet on a dark, rainy night.

DILOPHOSAURUS

Height: 0.9 metres (3ft)
Length: 1.5 metres (5ft)
First seen: *Jurassic Park*



The scientists are adding more 'excitement' to dinosaurs



The park is open, complete with Sea World-esque attractions



things needs to get put down. I found that was a different trajectory for one of these movies."

Speaking of trajectory, Trevorrow's career has certainly taken on a different path to the one he expected. He had directed the low-budget *Safety Not Guaranteed*, and was in the midst of securing budgeting for an \$8 million follow-up project when he received a phone call from producer Frank Marshall.

"He said he had a movie that he wanted to talk about," he reflects, "and it was *Jurassic Park 4*. Immediately I almost groaned, because I was so happy that I finally found what I was doing to do next, and then I realised I didn't, because if they wanted me to do this, if Steven Spielberg asked me to do this, I'm going to do it. I went in and talked to Steven for a while. We talked about why this movie exists and why it deserves to exist, and whether or not it should. Ultimately, I came out of there feeling like this is a challenge that was worth taking on.

"I didn't think any other filmmaker, at least not one that I can think of, would have been able to draw me away from having the privilege of making

Bryce Dallas Howard stars as Claire Dearing, the park's operations manager.



VOICES FROM THE JURASSIC ERA

Screenwriter David Koepp on *The Lost World*

"When the first film came out, some critics complained that the character relationships weren't as intense as they were in *Jaws*. My response to that is that sharks are real, they live in our world, so there was a level of realism that was possible in *Jaws* that just wasn't possible in *Jurassic Park*. We certainly did our best, but every time we'd try to write some sort of intimate emotional scene, it just got blown away because we kept saying to ourselves, 'Who cares? Where are the dinosaurs?' So with *Lost World* consider this: we're doing more adventures among the dinosaurs. You also have in Spielberg and Michael Crichton two of the finer storytellers around."

It may not be the biggest dinosaur, but its name still commands respect. We have a feeling it'll be up for showing those carnivores a trick or two.



TYRANNOSAURUS REX

Height: 5 metres (16ft 4in)
Length: 12 metres (40ft)
First seen: *Jurassic Park*

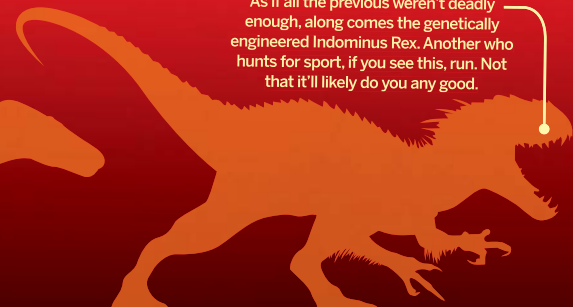
What better way to show you mean business by casually offing a T-Rex? An apex predator who goes around looking for trouble, you'll want to steer clear of this one.



SPINOSAURUS

Height: 6 metres (19ft 7in) to top of fin
Length: 13.4 metres (43ft 9in)
First seen: *Jurassic Park III*

As if all the previous weren't deadly enough, along comes the genetically engineered Indominus Rex. Another who hunts for sport, if you see this, run. Not that it'll likely do you any good.



INDOMINUS REX

Height: TBC
Length: 12 metres (40ft)
First seen: *Jurassic World*

a series of movies that slowly grew in size and allowed me to build a craft and hone a craft. But if this was something that he needed and wanted, I was going to pour my soul into making sure it was great."

Part of achieving that personal goal was recognising the tools at his disposal and not getting overwhelmed by the size and scope of the project. "I found it to be surprisingly easier than I expected in that when you're making an independent film, no matter what comes out of your imagination, you're immediately met with the fact that it's unaffordable," he details. "With a film of this scope and size and scale, you can dream big and large and whatever comes out of your head gets to go up on the movie screen. That's all I could ever ask for. It's not a challenge for me to come up with ideas. It's a challenge to find someone to throw down tens and hundreds of millions of dollars to put them on the screen. To be able to have that was a gift."

When he joined the project, the first thing Trevorrow did was read the previous screenplay for *Jurassic World* (written by *Rise and Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes*' Rick Jaffa and Amanda Silver), which led he and co-writer Derek Connolly to pen their own.

"One thing I felt very strongly about is that potentially why some of the other sequels didn't deliver on the promise of the first is, if you don't love the characters and you don't care about these people, you can have the most spectacular-looking dinosaurs in the world, and no one's going to give a damn. You have to not just feel the stakes in the context of people getting eaten, but in the context of people having an emotional experience. Everything I had discussed thematically is laid out pretty clearly in this movie. Hopefully it's not heavy-handed, but it is definitely what the movie's about. I think this movie is really about something. It's about a few things that I think people are really going to be able to connect to. It's also about people that we're going to care about."

Not that we won't see plenty of cool dinosaur action as well, which raises an interesting question: can the dinosaurs live up to the precedent set by the original? As impressive as the effects in *Lost World: Jurassic Park* and *Jurassic Park III* were, they somehow don't match the 1993 series debut.

"It's weird," admits Trevorrow, "in that I think many elements of *Jurassic Park* look fantastic to this day. But when I look at other elements, I could see how we could create behaviour that feels more animalistic. I can see how



Iron Man 3's Ty Simpkins and *Melissa & Joey*'s Nick Robinson join the fray.



Irrfan Khan plays park owner Masrani, who just wants everyone to have fun!

VOICES FROM THE JURASSIC ERA

Director Joe Johnston on *Jurassic Park III*

"What I wanted to do with the third one was go back to what worked in the original. In the second one, I think the effects were actually better... but everyone going onto that island knew exactly what they were in for. They were going there to either rescue someone who was there to experience the dinosaurs or they were going to exploit them. What was great about the first one is they had no idea. Steven at no point dictated to me what the movie had to be. I wanted to make it... a more compact story, with fewer characters and simpler agendas that involved some surprises, where things aren't quite what you think they are and people aren't who you might think they are."

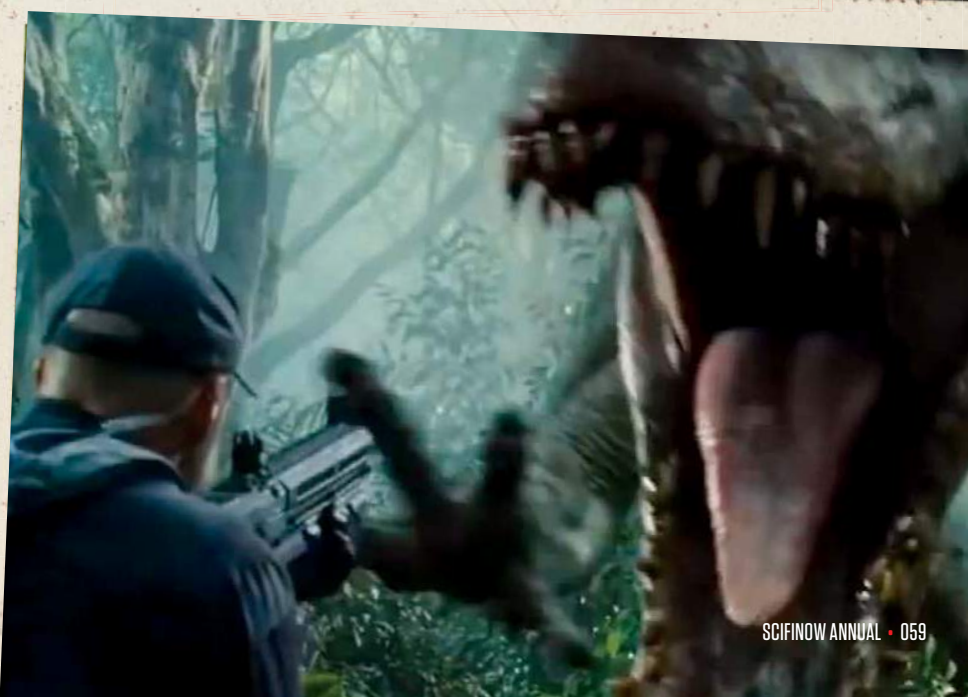
when dinosaurs are running, I can feel their feet touch the ground and they can make divots and throw dirt and grass into the air. There are things we can do now that are pretty extraordinary. All the visual effects team needed was the opportunity. I think because on *Jurassic Park* we were seeing those effects for the first time, they are indelible in a way that I'm not sure we'll ever see effects that will strike us the way that those did. That was a leap forward that can't be matched. Yet I've seen things with my eyes that you wouldn't believe. I'm pretty confident that the visual effects are not going to have a negative effect on this movie."

Observes Pratt, "The whole purpose of sci-fi is to create a world that's so dissimilar to our own that you can't be accused of criticising the world we live in. *Jurassic World* is a parable about the classic ethical tale of man meddling with the natural order of things for his own entertainment, like the earlier films, but this one has a new theme which is kind of shining a mirror to a society that's a little disenfranchised with the wonderment around them."

Jurassic World is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.



Jurassic World embraces the advancing technology we have today.



PARK RULES

HOW TO PUT YOUR SAFETY FIRST,
AS TAUGHT BY THE MOVIES



1.

BEWARE OF HYPER-
INTELLIGENT SHARKS
DEEP BLUE SEA (1999)



2.

DONT ANNOY THE
GUNSLINGER
WESTWORLD (1973)



3.

DONT FALL IN THE
CHOCOLATE RIVER
WILLY WONKA AND THE
CHOCOLATE
FACTORY (1971)



4.

DONT SURPRISE
A JEDI AT THE
CANTINA BAR
STAR WARS: ATTACK OF
THE CLONES (2002)



5.

ON NO ACCOUNT
DEFROST THE
PRISONERS
LOCKOUT (2012)

Femme Fatale

WRITER-DIRECTOR ANA LILY
AMIRPOUR TELLS SCIFINOW
ABOUT HER BLACK AND WHITE
IRANIAN VAMPIRE MOVIE
A GIRL WALKS HOME ALONE
AT NIGHT AND WHY SHE'S
FOREVER SCARRED
BY THE NEVERENDING
STORY



Vampires of the world

THREE GLOBAL VAMPS YOU DON'T WANT TO MEET

Brahmapursha

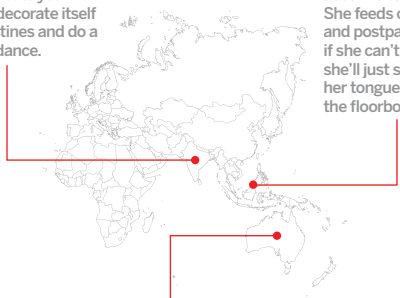
India
This impossible-to-kill creature wins points for swagger. It decants your blood into a skull, then extracts and eats your brain. It will decorate itself in their intestines and do a ceremonial dance.

Penanggalan

Malaysia
She separates her head from her body, trailing her spine and organs, which she uses like tentacles. She feeds on infants and postpartum, and if she can't get in she'll just stretch her tongue under the floorboards.

Yara-ma-yha-who

Australia
This creature waits in trees for its victims. Its hands and feet are covered in suckers that fasten onto your skin as it drinks your blood. Then it swallows you whole and vomits you back up until you become like him.



A GIRL WALKS HOME ALONE AT NIGHT

E'VE PREPARED QUESTIONS FOR ANA LILY AMIRPOUR, THE FILMMAKER BEHIND ACCLAIMED VAMPIRE MOVIE A GIRL WALKS HOME ALONE

At Night, including one about influences. The heart-shaped 'LYNCH' badge on her jumper makes us rethink that one, while the opening minutes of our interview – during which the theme from *The NeverEnding Story* is sung – makes us lose track of the rest.

A Girl Walks Home Alone At Night has a lot of buzz behind it. A black and white Iranian film about a vampire in a chador (Sheila Vand) who enters the life of the aimless Arash (Arash Marandi), it's very funny, dry and stylish. "If I heard, 'Oh hey guys, let's go watch this black and white Iranian film...'" laughs Amirpour. "Forget the vampire part, those two things are repellent. Urgh, god no, what a terrible idea!"

However, it's a combination that has grabbed people's attention, with Vand's vamp already feeling iconic as she glides through the lonely night-time streets of Bad City, often on a skateboard. "It was the chador," she remembers of the moment of inspiration. "It was a prop for another film, and I grabbed it, put it on, and I just directly felt like a bat, a stingray. It moves a certain way, I just felt like a creature. And then I was like, 'Oh yeah, of course, this is an Iranian vampire in a brilliant disguise. Nobody's going to expect anything from her.' So the gateway to the whole story was from her."

The film has drawn plenty of comparisons to the godheads of idiosyncratic indie cinema, like David Lynch and Jim Jarmusch, who did the arthouse vampire hit *Only Lovers Left Alive*. "Jarmusch, no, I'm actually not really a fan..." Amirpour demurs. "I did absolutely love his vampire film. We must have been making them at exactly the same time, 'Whoa, me and him are clearly huffing on the same vampire gas!' But I never really was into his early films; I found them quite boring... so maybe it means my film's boring [laughs]. I'm much more into Lynch, Sergio Leone, Robert Zemeckis and John Landis."

On the question of influences, she has no hesitation in verifying the films that inspired her. "I'm 100 per cent a composite of my influences." She reels off a list of key movies from her childhood, including Eddie Murphy's golden period and the making-of documentary on John Landis' *Thriller*. "*NeverEnding Story*, for sure," she enthuses. "When that horse sinks in the swamp of sadness, I think that was my first construction of loss. Fuck, man! Artax! It's savage! I loved *Return To Oz*. *Gremlins* is brilliant; it's really fucking dark. They don't

make 'em like that any more! If you're nine years old now, you're watching *Frozen*. From seven or eight years old to 14 I watched every horror movie. I watched *Faces Of Death* when I was nine."

The film itself isn't really that dark; it's quite arch and self-aware, quick to find the humour in situations that are often really quite bleak. "Yeah, life is absurd," she says. "Even Lynch, the darkest, weirdest shit will happen, like Bobby Peru in *Wild At Heart*, the 'Fuck me!' scene. Bobby Peru is the ultimate gangster of all time in my opinion, but there's something funny about him. Maybe it's me. I think life is funny."

Many have been quick to hail her film as a feminist statement. It certainly comes across as one, with a beautiful vampire feeding on a patriarchal society. "People call me a feminist," says Amirpour. "It's weird when you make a film, because when you're writing and shooting and editing, that's when I'm involved. Now, it's like talking about someone you were in love with two years ago. And my relationship to my film is kind of like my relationship to my reflection in the mirror: how often do you really look at yourself, and then when you do, you make an 'I'm looking at myself' face. You know better what my film is really about than I do."

"I'm not being totally nihilistic and saying, 'Oh, I don't know,'" she continues. "Clearly I have 'I'm lonely and I love music and I don't want to die...' She's kind of a tomboy, like a little bit androgynous and tough, and could fuck you up. The feminist thing... I think is interesting, maybe there is something like that. I wonder if when Tarantino made *Kill Bill*, did people accuse of him being a feminist? For myself, one of the big things is who's good and bad, and how you never really know people. The feminist thing always comes up, and I find it really interesting to find an avenue that interests me to talk about this, because people clearly want to talk about it."

It may provoke different views, but the story Amirpour told is a captivating one, and a distinctly personal take on the genre. "A vampire is really the ultimate mythical supernatural character," she enthuses. "It can be this beautiful thing, horribly terrifying, drug addict, historian, romantic, serial killer, savage, everything! You have *Nosferatu* and *Lost Boys* and *Once Bitten*!"

Next up for Amirpour is her cannibal movie *The Bad Batch*, which has recently cast Jason Momoa, Keanu Reeves and Jim Carrey. "It's a desert-set post-apocalyptic love story about a big cannibal who falls in love with his food," she grins. "Don't play with your food! It's got a really dope soundtrack, it's like a psychedelic *El Topo*!" We're in. ☞

A Girl Walks Home Alone At Night is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.

SOME HOUSES

B

ABORREN

GUILLERMO DEL TORO
TAKES US INSIDE
HIS GOTHIC HORROR
CRIMSON PEAK

IF THERE'S ONE WORKING FILMMAKER WE ASSOCIATE WITH THE GOTHIC, IT'S FANTASTIC CINEMA'S MODERN MASTER GUILLERMO DEL TORO. FROM THE TERRIBLE PRICE OF immortality in *Cronos* to the brutally wicked stepfather of *Pan's Labyrinth*, his films are steeped in the genre. With its old dark house, sinister aristocrats, imperilled ingénue and unquiet dead, *Crimson Peak* looks to be the ultimate expression of this love, and quite frankly, we're surprised that it has taken him this long. As it turns out, del Toro has had *Crimson Peak* on his mind for quite some time.

"It was really the fascination I have with Gothic romance, which is a genre that has fallen by the wayside," explains del Toro. "Because when you say gothic romance, most people think of Fabio holding a girl by the edge of a cliff in a paperback by Barbara Cartland, or the Vincent Price movies with Roger Corman. The first movie I ever saw was *Wuthering Heights* with Laurence Olivier. That's the first movie I ever saw in my life. And you can go back and find an interview with me as early as you want, it's not something I made up for *Crimson Peak*, it's completely true!"

"I really loved the great, grand lush classics like *Rebecca*, and *Dragonwyck* with Vincent Price," he continues. "They are this infuriatingly addictive mixture of the trappings of a supernatural/horror movie and the darkened emotions of a melodrama or a romance story. I thought maybe I can do a movie that is a very classic, almost old-fashioned model of that kind of story, but with a little bit more of a modern edge on the sex and the violence and the colour palette, making it really vibrant photographically and in terms of design. The genesis was also to try to screw with the idea of the pure, virginal heroine, to have two female characters who grow into very powerful figures, having the villains not be just towering dark figures and make them hopefully a little more human."

Our tale begins at the end of the 19th century in New York, where budding author Edith Cushing (Mia Wasikowska) is wooed by mysterious visiting land-owner Sir Thomas Sharpe (Tom Hiddleston). Ignoring the advice of her childhood friend Dr Alan McMichael (Charlie Hunnam), Edith marries Thomas and moves with him to the north of England, and into the remote and cavernous old house he shares with his icy sister Lucille (Jessica Chastain). With strict instructions not to venture beyond the permitted rooms, Edith



THE INTENTION
I HAD WAS TO
MAKE THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL FILM I
HAVE EVER
MADE, AND I
FEEL IT IS
GUILLERMO DEL TORO



begins to discover the house's dark secrets, and realises that the living aren't the only ones in residence.

If this is all sounding a little bit more like del Toro's Spanish-language films than his Hollywood movies, that's no coincidence. "It's the first thematically really daring movie I've done in the English language," he explains. "It doesn't fall neatly into a genre or a thing that is in vogue. Most of the movies I've done in English, I take great care to fall into pop culture, that they can be digested by the ease in which they play with those conventions. But Gothic romance is in many ways almost an affectation or an acquired taste of a more rarefied arena, and then if you also do it in a dark way and in a way that is very vivid... *Crimson Peak* is much more experimental and much more daring and much more, in many ways, personal like the smaller films."

There isn't a more exciting cast for del Toro to take this journey with. The

Crimson Peak line-up went through some changes before filming, with Tom Hiddleston stepping in for Benedict Cumberbatch in the role of the tall, dark and handsome Thomas, while Mia Wasikowska replaced Emma Stone as Edith, who has more backbone than many give her credit for. As far as replacements go, it doesn't get better than that. Wasikowska has established herself as one of the most exciting actors working today, with stunning performances in *Stoker*, *Maps To The Stars* and *Only Lovers Left Alive*, while Hiddleston has balanced his Marvel duties by working with fascinating directors like Jim Jarmusch and Ben Wheatley. When you add the consistently excellent Jessica Chastain as Thomas' sinister sister Lucille, you've got one hell of a cast.

"We were casting from a point of view that actually loved the characters, good guys and bad guys alike," explains del Toro. "If you do your job right in a gothic romance, people should come out equally, if not more, enamoured, of the bad guys than the good guys. The easiest way to satisfy the audience is to create a bad guy that they applaud when they die. But ultimately in most of movies I have tried to avoid this... I try my damndest to show the human side of the good guys and the bad guys. And the actors brought that compassion and understanding with them. We created very careful biographies and very careful tools for them to remember that they were not just a function to the melodrama, but actually characters with a terrible story."

Despite that careful preparation, del Toro tells us that the cast continued to find ways to surprise him with what they brought to the characters. "They surprised me every day," he enthuses. "When you're working with actors this good, it's truly fantastic. I think that



Edith will discover the Sharpes' terrible secrets.

WASIKOWSKA VS HIDDLESTON

ULTIMATE GOTH-OFF

Is Mia Wasikowska's indie cred a match for Hiddleston's Marvel-mania? It's a Goth-off!



ROUND ONE



Alice Kingsleigh (*Alice In Wonderland*) vs Loki (*Thor*)

Hiddleston has this from the very get-go, as Wasikowska is hobbled by Tim Burton's decision to make Alice one of his few non-Goth heroines. And the film's not great.

Pan's Labyrinth and *Crimson* are the two movies where we had the perfect cast, and in both instances you provide them with a set of colours, and then on the day they find together a new way of making it alive.

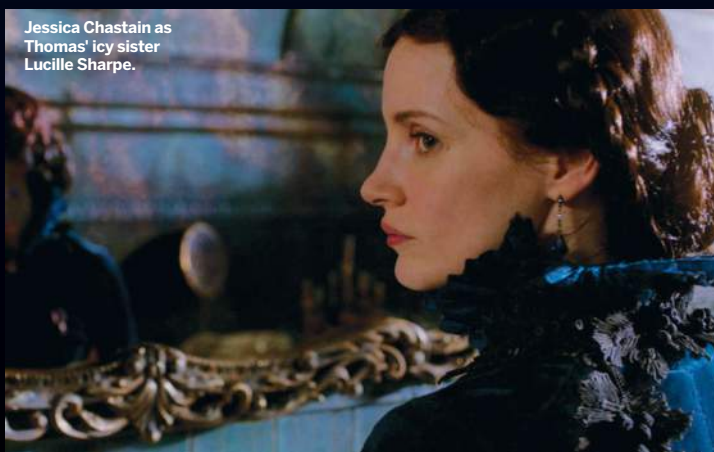
"Jessica always found a way to make Lucille what we needed in the moment. She asked me early on, 'What can you tell me about Lucille that is not in the biography that I can use on the day?' and I said she doesn't blink. And if you watch the movie again, I think she blinks three times in the entire movie."

Visually, del Toro has pushed himself further than he ever has before. The cinematography is gorgeous, the costume design is beautiful, and Allerdale Hall itself is stunning. "A house as old as this one becomes, in time, a living thing," Thomas tells Edith. With its dazzling hallway, long dark corridors, a creaky elevator and promises of unsafe areas, the house is, to deploy a cliché, a character in its own right, filled with the kind of detail we've come to expect from del Toro.

"Well, that was the intention I had, yes, to make the most beautiful film I have made, and I feel it is," he explains. "I think it is superior in craftsmanship to anything I have ever done. If you're expecting a romance like in *Sleepless In Seattle* or if you're expecting a horror like a torture-porn, found-footage movie, you probably will never fall into this. But if you know and love Gothic romance and Victorian fiction, I wanted to give you a fully realised world that was 360 degrees: sound design, music, image, everything. If you fall into it you're completely immersed."

Immersing the actors, as well as the audience, in the world of the film meant that it was vital to del Toro to actually build Allerdale Hall on the set. "To me, it was of the utmost importance, because to me a movie is not pieces," he explains. "To me, a

Jessica Chastain as Thomas' icy sister Lucille Sharpe.



The stunning Allerdale Hall: Beautiful, crumbling, unsafe...



Del Toro told us that he wanted *Crimson Peak* to be his most beautiful film.



movie is not set design and wardrobe design and cinematography and story. It's all one thing, and the same goes for the acting. If the actors are going to enter a house that they expect to be magnificent, and you give them a green screen, I think something gets lost in the translation there... I think that it is very important that we research and detail every texture, every colour, because they're telling a story. You go to Allerdale Hall and it's cold and dark and rotting away, and that's definitely an aid to the journey."

There's also the matter of the ghosts, whose appearances punctuate *Crimson Peak*'s air of menace with bursts of real terror. "Avoiding spoilers, but very much like *Devil's Backbone*, the ghosts in the movie, little by little you realise that the true horror of the film is of human origin," he teases. "And that's a very difficult line to walk, because obviously you want the audience to be engrossed by the tale, but the ultimate goal is to show a different result. I wanted to make them translucent and somewhat beautiful, but I wanted them to feel physical on the set, so we went with make-up effects. Actors were on the set in make-up working with the other actors. I decided since the movie was very, very carefully designed and colour-coded, the ghosts would be colour-coded. Designing them took about six months. We did beautiful costumes for some of them. And it's an interesting way of telling the story visually, it's not just a capricious desire to colour code in an innovative way. It really is coming out of a storytelling compulsion."

"When we were doing *Pacific Rim*, I insisted back then, instead of having everything high-tech, super-polished, car commercial surfaces, we went for decay and rust. I used to call *Pacific Rim* Goth-tech." You'll have to wait until 2017 for Pacific "Goth-tech" Rim 2.

Crimson Peak is currently in cinemas.

ROUND TWO



India Stoker (*Stoker*) vs Loki (*The Avengers*)

Hiddleston's next eligible Goth role is... Loki again, and this time loses to Wasikowska's fascinating steely turn in Park-Chan Wook's wonderfully creepy chiller.

ROUND THREE



Ava vs Adam (*Only Lovers Left Alive*)

The duo both vamped up in Jim Jarmusch's brilliant deadpan vampire romance. Wasikowska has more fun with her impulsive Ava, but Hiddleston's Goth game is that much more powerful as the brooding Adam.

ROUND FOUR



Agatha Weiss (*Maps To The Stars*) vs The Great Escapo (*Muppets Most Wanted*)

This one seems a little unfair, given that one character is a sinister, gloved mental patient and the other is a cameo in a *Muppets* movie...

RESULT: IT'S A DRAW!
Crimson Peak will have to be the tie-break...



INFINITY WAR [AND BEYOND]



IRON MAN



CAPTAIN AMERICA



HULK



THOR



NICK FURY



BLACK WIDOW



HAWKEYE



QUICKSILVER

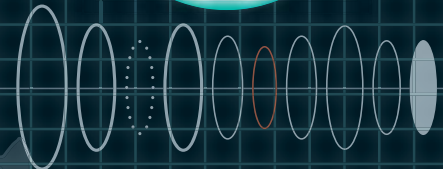


SCARLET WITCH

> CMD // RUN EMAIL SCRIPT // INBOX // NEW MAIL

Marvel are only just getting started. With Age Of Ultron within reach and a road towards Infinity War that includes Spider-Man, Black Panther and more, the MCU is going supernova. Mastermind Joss Whedon and stars Mark Ruffalo, Aaron Taylor-Johnson and James Spader discuss how they've laid groundwork for many more years of Marvel movies...

MK. 50 Are Prototype



SECURITY THREAT



> Personal note

Tony... whatever you do, don't forget to pick up an anniversary present for Pepper

Possible ideas

- Roses
- Lamborghini
- Another giant bunny..

Continued

Avengers: Age Of Ultron is going to one of the cinematic events of the year, bringing together the stars of some of the biggest movies of the last few years. Yet even in light of this, you sense that the best is yet to come. Post-*Age Of Ultron*, there will be *Captain America: Civil War*, *Thor: Ragnarok* and *Guardians Of The Galaxy 2*, as well as solo outings for Ant-Man, Doctor Strange, Black Panther and Captain Marvel, with all paths leading to two-part monolith *Avengers: Infinity War*.

The biggest story of all, however, involves a red-and-blue lycra-clad superhuman going by the name of Spider-Man. With Marvel Studios and Sony having come to an agreement for the wall-crawler to appear in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (albeit still owned by his parent studio), you sense that Marvel will stop at nothing in their bid to make this universe as big as possible.

The interconnectivity of the MCU offers challenges to filmmakers working within it who must take into account what has come before and where things are going. That's especially true for Joss Whedon, whose *Avengers* films have numerous solo adventures feeding in and out of them.

"The trick of these things," Whedon concurs, "is to always make the film respect everything that has happened in the other films, but also not assuming that everybody is going to have seen them. Tony Stark obviously has the events of *Iron Man 3* that have taken place. Tony is very much in the game, but at the same time he is spending a lot of time in the lab trying to figure out a way to change

the game, basically. It's not enough to put on a suit and punch people; he is definitely thinking big picture. He wants answers as much as he wants to beat the next guy.

"The events of *Winter Soldier* also affect us enormously," he adds in regards to *Avengers: Age Of Ultron*, "because they affect SHIELD, and SHIELD is a part of the *Avengers* universe. They are working under a new paradigm where there isn't an all-powerful organisation watching over them. They are also working under a new paradigm because of the events of the television shows. *Agents Of SHIELD* has shown that there has been fallout from the first *Avengers* movie and that people of powers are cropping up. There is a whole slate of television shows that are going to reiterate that point, so it is a new universe. It's a little more volatile; it's a little bit Wild West for superheroes right now. Everybody in the world knows that there are Avengers, superheroes and villains and all kinds of crazy stuff."

All of which promises to feed into future Marvel efforts. For instance, there seems to be little doubt that events in *Avengers: Age Of Ultron* will impact on 2016's *Captain America: Civil War*, and the conflict that will arise between Chris Evans' Captain America and Robert Downey Jr's Iron Man (with a rumoured appearance by Spider-Man somewhere in there as well). Whedon gets the chance to explore the dynamics between the two of them a little more closely in this film.

"Cap and Tony start off fairly harmonious, because they respect each other's place," says Whedon. "Cap runs the team, Tony finances

He's always angry, but Widow seems to calm him.

Continued

and designs everything, and they both have their own stuff going on as well. But their alliance, which is based on the idea that they recognise their differences and their different skill sets, is going to be put to the test seconds in, and it's going to be Tony who does it. Literally the first word out of Cap's mouth is admonishing Tony. It's who they are, and it's fun to watch those guys go head to head, because they are so different."

Also different is the element that new additions Quicksilver (Aaron Taylor-Johnson) and Scarlet Witch (Elizabeth Olsen) are bringing to the mix. As noted at the end of *Winter Soldier*, the twins are ushering in the age of miracles, an age that will flourish in 2016's *Doctor Strange*, which will star Benedict Cumberbatch as Marvel's master of the mystic arts. It is, however, *Age Of Ultron* that will plant the seeds for that mysticism.

"They have powers that are very new," Whedon points out, "and it's exciting for me as a filmmaker, because they are very visual. Scarlet Witch's manipulation of objects, her manipulation of people's thoughts and Quicksilver's super speed are not things we have seen before in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. So I get to play in a new way that will really make the scenes more visceral and exciting, but it's also a sea-change for the Avengers themselves, because no matter what they have been facing, usually it comes down to punching the other guy, and suddenly they are dealing with powers that seem mad to them – except to Thor, because on Asgard stuff like that happens all the time."

One element whose long-range impact is still to be determined is Ultron itself, a sentient robotic threat to humanity as a whole, and something whose impact on the Avengers themselves is life-altering.

James Spader, who provides the voice and motion-capture performance for Ultron, believes that the robot probably views Tony Stark as the absolute defining personification of what's wrong with the world. "The Avengers as a whole he looks upon as being reflective of the decline of civilisation, and all the more so that Tony Stark is responsible for his being to a degree. Very quickly, Ultron becomes a self-created being as he continues to advance and develop and evolve and so on. But in a funny way for other characters introduced in this film, Tony Stark represents a catalyst to the problem.

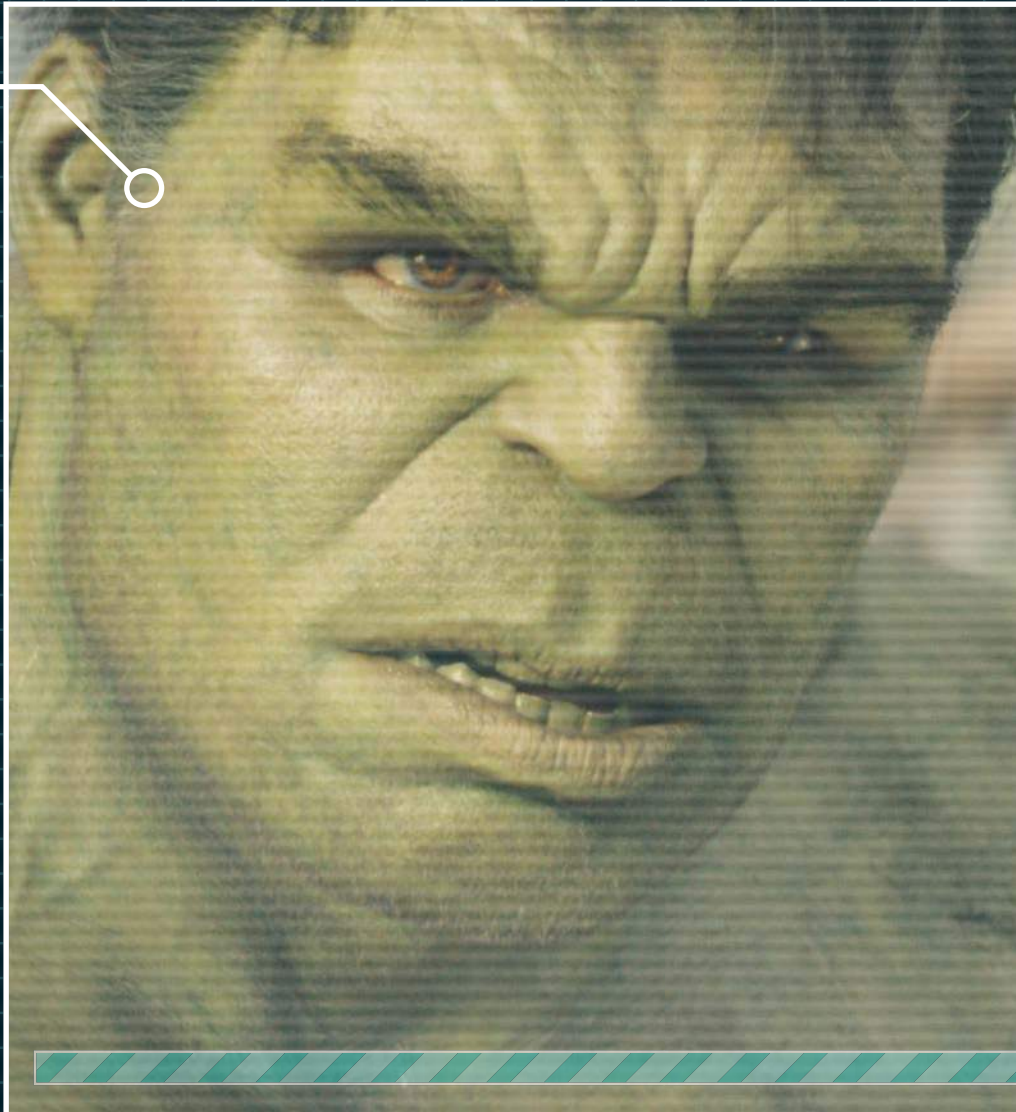
"When Joss came over to my apartment in New York," he continues, "we sat on the roof and drank a bottle of wine and talked for several hours. He was excited about the eccentricities and idiosyncrasies of this character, not just what's intimidating or

the aggression of this character, but also his insecurities and problems, of which there are many. That's what fascinated Joss and that's what fascinated me."

It intrigued actor Mark Ruffalo as well. Reprising his dual role of Bruce Banner and the Hulk, it is Banner (to a much lesser degree) and Stark that are responsible for the creation of Ultron, and therefore everything that happens.

"In the movie," explains Ruffalo, "Banner and Stark team up to create a peacekeeper force for all of humankind, but their experiment goes disastrously awry. It was a big leap to go where they do, because they are basically creating life; that's where these guys have finally come to. They're fooling around in the realm of the gods now, and human beings don't do very well when they enter that sacred space, so they, of course, reap the hubris of such a profound act."

Spader elaborates, "Ultron is able to access anything technological, and anything that is available on the internet has become



It really doesn't look good for our favourite heroes.

> Exe. pull quote

HE THINKS
HE'S DOING
THE LOGICAL
ROBOT THING,
BUT HE'S FULL
OF RAGE
JOSS WHEDON

> NEW MAIL FROM: P. PARKER SUBJECT: SUPERHERO REGISTRATION ACT

> NEW MAIL FROM: P. POTTS SUBJECT: WAKANDA FLIGHT DETAILS

> NEW MAIL FROM: M. HILL SUBJECT: *URGENT* DEBRIEF MEETING

> NEW MAIL FROM: S. STRANGE SUBJECT: TAROT READING (SPAM)

> NEW MAIL FROM: H. PYM SUBJECT: GAIN 3 INCHES IN HOURS (SPAM)

> NEW MAIL FROM: GROOT SUBJECT: I AM GROOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOT

> NEW MAIL FROM: H. DUCK SUBJECT: MEET UP FOR A FRIENDLY DRINK?



Brutasha or
GammaWidow?
It's happening.



Thor came back
to Earth for Jane,
not more war.

Continued

part of his stimulation and information and is embedded in his psyche. I think that's inclusive of even conversation. But it's streaming all the time. He has an ungoverned access to it, and it's constantly streaming into whatever processing chip he has in there somewhere. So it's overwhelming and also inconceivable. He has powers and knowledge that are impossible for him to harness, and that mixed with a lot of hubris and psychopathic tendencies are formidable. Troubling. He's too strong for his own good."

Ruffalo says, "What makes this movie work is that we don't know if the Avengers are going to make it. They have a lot going against them, and it's really their shadow that they're fighting against. Ultron is like the negative manifestation of all of their worst attributes."

"Ultron has many fathers," emphasises Whedon, "but ultimately he is the creation of Tony Stark. Stark and Banner worked together to create him, but Banner doesn't really get the credit because it's Tony's obsession and the obsession is to solve the

world. He's seen it mess up. He's messed up himself so many times and he's gotten to a higher ambition than he had before, which is just to make it better. He saw the alien army and was not okay with that. He spent most of *Iron Man 3* having anxiety attacks about it, and so he's got this obsession, which is to create a perfect peace. He believes that with Loki's sceptre and the tech that is encapsulated inside – this 'magical' gem – that he can build that."

At that same time, he concedes, there is no such thing as a perfect peace, and for that and other reasons Ultron has a cognitive dissonance that spins him to the point where he's "bonkers."

Whedon muses, "He also becomes self-aware and sentient and knows everything all at once, and is privy to the internet, which means he is into everything and everybody's ideas and everybody's conflicts and everybody's goddamn kittens. His so-called mission is to bring peace, but his way of doing it is to get rid of the status quo and maybe

Continued

everybody else, because humanity is full of conflict. That's just part of what we are.

"The idea is that the way to protect man is to control or even destroy man," he continues. "At the same time, what I like about Ultron is that what's also going on is that he has enormous issues about daddy and about the team, and the Avengers, who are in a way responsible for him. He thinks he's doing the logical robot thing, but he's full of rage and he doesn't even know that. He's not particularly sure what his plan is. He goes from thing to thing. He knows what he wants to do, but at the same time he doesn't really know why he wants to do it. He doesn't know he's the biggest threat humanity ever faced."

And *Avengers: Age Of Ultron* is promising to be the biggest success yet in the annals of the Marvel Cinematic Universe; a potential victory that, in many ways, Ruffalo lies at the feet of Whedon. "It's deceptive, because what Joss loves and what he knows is serious literature and serious playwrights and serious pieces of work," he opines. "Those are his reference points, so as a writer he's constructing something that's incredibly complex, and doing it in a way that makes us feel like we don't know why it's working so well. He is telling big stories that have grand themes, but doing it in a way that is culturally acceptable to everybody – which is, in itself, a huge feat. With Joss it starts with the writing, and the fact that each character has their moment is a tip of the hat to him. He knows the story and the characters so well that he knows when those two things should and must intersect, so that you get the perfect balance of character. You feel like you're being satisfied about who these people are, while at the same time pushing the story forward."

Adds Taylor-Johnson, "Joss is the ultimate Avenger, essentially. He's the team leader. He can see behind everyone's eyes. I'd like to see



Amid the fighting will no doubt be lots of smashing.



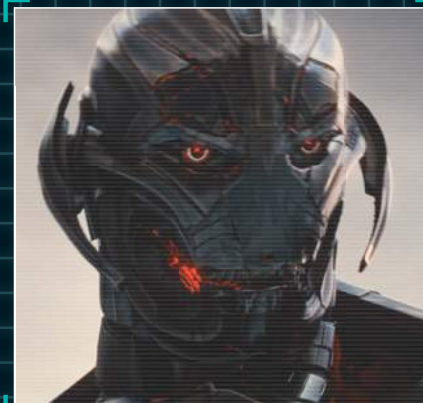
Following in the footsteps of Evan Peters, Aaron Taylor-Johnson has a lot to live up to.

him when he's writing, just being like some schizophrenic man and talking to himself in five or six different kinds of characters. I rely on him and put all my trust in him. He's open to talk about everything, our thoughts and ideas. He's brilliant."

"On the set," Spader states, "Joss distils this tremendous sense of the whole to just the tiniest things and that is to me perfect in terms of the relationship between the director and actor. He's very specific and very often looking at the smallest element that affects the whole in a dramatic fashion."

For his part, Whedon has his own expectations: "What was so grand about this weird, disparate group coming together is that we know that nothing lasts forever, and that there is a dark side to everything. It's going to be a little more grown-up than the first one. A little scarier. A little funkier. But in the end, it's got the same values; it's got the same extraordinary characters and a lot of humour. And yes, there may be some punching."

Avengers: Age Of Ultron is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.



I spy with my little eye, something beginning with 'V'.

> Quicksilver memo

RUNNER RUNNER

AARON TAYLOR-JOHNSON
ON QUICKSILVER

Aaron Taylor-Johnson (*Kick-Ass*, *Godzilla*) describes Quicksilver's role in *Avengers: Age Of Ultron* as follows: "It continues on from where it left off at the end of *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, where we did a little tag where Quicksilver and Scarlet Witch were basically experiments in HYDRA's basement. They're out to seek revenge on Tony Stark due to what they've been through in the past. They're Eastern European and in a place called Sokovia. They lost their parents. They're very angry, and putting their anger towards Tony Stark. These two survived the experiments that HYDRA was doing and became enhanced. My character has super speed and Elizabeth Olsen, who plays Quicksilver's sister, Scarlet Witch, has psychological powers.

"He's quick-tempered and becomes frustrated with everything because due to his super speed, he's already there," the actor continues. "Everything moves too slowly for him. It's been fun to play with this character and, more importantly, discover who he is. Quicksilver and Scarlet Witch only have one another. It's just them against the world and they can't do without each other, which is nice. This is also a yin and yang thing. I'm very fatherly and physical and protective over her, and she's sort of that motherly nurturing and caring and more emotional and thoughtful person. They balance each other out. You couldn't really have Quicksilver without Scarlet Witch."

NEW RECRUITS?

EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES THEY MAY BE, BUT THE CURRENT CROP OF AVENGERS CAN'T GO ON FOREVER. WE LOOK AT THE CANDIDATES TO STEP INTO THEIR MASSIVE SHOES...



SPIDER-MAN

Confirmed for Phase 3, anything less than a starring role is unlikely. It's Peter's third different outing, but it's not an origin story.



FALCON

Captain America's sidekick (and successor) in the comics, his casting in *Ultron* points to a potentially bigger role later on.



WAR MACHINE

Rhodey was prominent in the promos for *Age Of Ultron*. In the absence of any future *Iron Man* movies, this may be his moment.



BUCKY

In the comics he overcomes his brainwashing and becomes an Avenger, even taking on the role of Cap or 'Bucky Cap' to Spidey.



BLACK PANTHER

Confirmed for a role in *Captain America: Civil War*, it is likely that *Infinity War* will be T'Challa, King of Wakanda's time to shine.



CAPTAIN MARVEL

With the superheroine's own movie being released in time for *Infinity War*, we're expecting her to have a big impact on things.



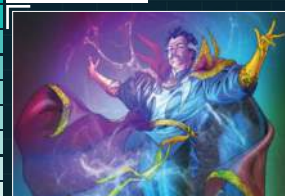
ANT-MAN

The Avengers are full of egotists and superhumans – an everyman is direly needed. No one is more ideal for this than Scott Lang.



WASP

Looks like it'll be Pym's daughter Hope rather than Janet, but wherever Ant-Man goes, it's hard not to imagine a Wasp far behind.



DOCTOR STRANGE

It's only recently that the Sorcerer Supreme became a fixture in the comics. But a mention in *Winter Soldier* puts an eye on him.



NAMOR

An Easter egg from *Iron Man 2* showed an ocean location marked on a map – if that's not a nod to the King of Atlantis then what is?



LUKE CAGE

Of the Netflix crop he's the most likely to make the step up, having lead the Avengers in the comics and fulfilling the everyman role.



WOLVERINE

If they can work things out with Spider-Man then they should be able to do the same with Logan – hopefully with Hugh Jackman.



TV

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- 92** Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell
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HEROES ON INFINITE EARTHS

AS THE NEW SEASONS OF ARROW AND THE FLASH STORM OUR SCREENS, WITH LEGENDS OF TOMORROW UP AHEAD, THE CW IS BLAZING AN UNSTOPPABLE TRAIL OF SUPERHERO STARDUST. WE SPOKE TO THE PRODUCERS AND CAST ABOUT HOW ITS FLAGSHIP SHOWS WILL VENTURE EVEN FURTHER OUTSIDE OF THE BOX...

IN THE CLIFFHANGER SEASON FINALE OF THE FLASH, SPEEDSTER BARRY ALLEN BROKE THE TIME BARRIER AND, IN THE PROCESS, TRIGGERED A SINGULARITY THAT THREATENED the world. Coming into the show's second season, it would seem to be pretty obvious that Barry will be able to return things to normal. But what he can't undo – no matter how fast he runs – is the impact he's had on the DC TV landscape.

For starters, ratings for *The Flash* have actually been higher than *Arrow*, the series that spawned it, and that success – couple with a ratings-breaking *Flash/Arrow* crossover – has led to the creation of a forthcoming additional spin-off, *Legends Of Tomorrow*, and has even played a role in the launch of *Supergirl*.

But even those things pale in comparison to the fact that the success of *The Flash* seems to have resulted in *Arrow*'s Oliver Queen not only admitting that he's happy in that show's season finale, but allowing him to actually smile.

What the hell is going on? Does that mean in Season Four we're going to see a lighter approach taken to life in Starling City? Will everybody be kind of lightening up? Don't count on it.

"I'm actually glad you brought that up," enthuses *Arrow* executive producer Marc Guggenheim. "We ended last year of *Arrow* with Oliver in an emotional place that we always intended to bring him to. Now, of course, everyone is just going to think we're making the show into *Flash*. I think when people watch Season Four, they'll see that Oliver is happy and he's in a more evolved place, and he's just not the same."

Stephen Amell, who portrays Queen, aka the soon-to-be-christened Green Arrow, concurs. "The first three seasons," he offers, "closed a chapter for Oliver. He made the decision to walk away from it all. It doesn't get any more profound and final than that. It doesn't mean that he can't come back, but he was defined by the hooded vigilante persona, which as we saw in Season Two the first time he put on that hood, that version – the killer version, the remorseless version, the one that wanted to do everything on his own because any time he trusted someone, that person turned against him or split aside from him – is gone. He can't exist anymore. So even if Oliver encounters dire circumstances – and it is our show, so he will, almost immediately – he will handle them in a different way."

As far as Grant Gustin is concerned, his alter ego of Barry Allen/The Flash has gone through tremendous changes as well as a result of what he went through last year.

"As Season One was winding down, he was getting a lot of confidence," says Gustin. "He was feeling like he knew what he was doing. He felt that he had that team behind him, and they all felt like they could take down these meta-humans. And they were doing some good. He was this hero that everyone says he was. But all of that has kind of been turned on its head a little bit in Season Two.

"The Flash is getting a lot of acclaim from the city for being a hero," he continues, "and Barry is having a hard time dealing with that, just because, as we all know, Eddie stopped Wells. He was the hero that day, and Barry knows that. As a result, he's having a hard time dealing with the attention and has kind of shunned everybody that he works with, because he doesn't want anyone else to have to die."

Ironically, just as Oliver Queen is looking at the bright side of life, Barry

BARRY'S HAVING A HARD TIME DEALING WITH THE ATTENTION... HE DOESN'T WANT ANYONE ELSE TO DIE
GRANT GUSTIN

Diggle (David Ramsey) will suit up himself in Season Four.



If Oliver's back, it's likely because trouble's afoot.





ARROW / THE FLASH

DREAMING OF KILLER FROST

Danielle Panabaker on fulfilling the Speed Force prophecy

There is a moment while The Flash is breaking the time barrier in the Season One finale where the audience catches quick glimpses of images from different time periods, including a, well, flash of actress Danielle Panabaker in the guise of DC Comics' Killer Frost, which would seem to be a portent of things to come. While Panabaker isn't sure what the future holds, she does admit it was exciting being transformed into the character.

"Originally," she reflects, "this idea was that Barry ran so fast that he saw into the future, an idea that Andrew Kreisberg had for earlier in the season. We started working on the look in November of last year, particularly the costume. The costume had the biggest shift from beginning to end and the first suit that we built was a one-piece, like a cat suit. So that was intense. I remember looking at it and thinking, 'How am I going to walk every day?' 'Hot darn, it's going to be hard to go the bathroom.' Things like

that. That was the first iteration. Then they started all over, so we started again and we ended up with what we had that you don't really see. It's blue leather pants with this corset top, which I love.

"Then," she continues, "with the hair, the first wig we tried on was a pixie, because looking at the comic books, there are a lot of pixie wigs. So we tried it on and it looked great. What was cool was between myself and Andrew and everybody else, we all pretty quickly decided it should actually be longer. That wig was handmade, and I think it's beautiful. It was hard to get white hair like that. The same thing with the make-up. It was an evolving look, for sure. We did lots of tests. There was a moment where Andrew wanted to see my lips completely whited out. The same colour, which we tried, but I felt strongly that a navy lip would look better. I'm really happy with the way that turned out."

Allen is going to be carrying himself with a bit more gravitas. Gustin agrees, "Yes, he's kind of going about things in a different way where we find him. It's my feeling that a lot of Season Two will see Barry maturing, trying to find his confidence again."

Andrew Kreisberg, who serves as executive producer on *The Flash* and *Arrow* alongside Greg Berlanti, believes that last season was "magical" for both shows, but that the former really surpassed their wildest expectations.

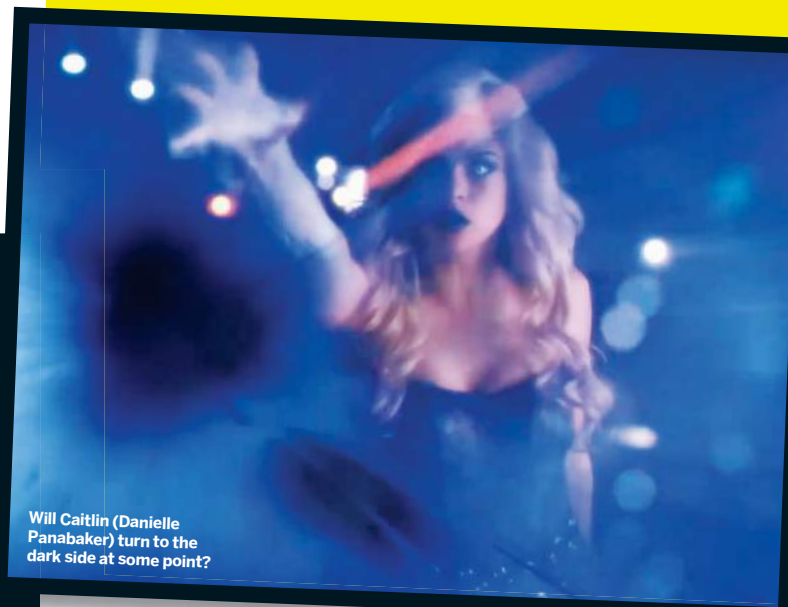
"Greg has certainly been in charge of far more shows than I have," he explains, "but we've said there's only a couple of times in your career where you get to have a season like that, where it started out strong and seemed to only get stronger. Part of that was, for whatever reason, we felt like we had a really good handle on what the show was very early on. There weren't as many growing pains, certainly as there were on *Arrow* where, if you look at some of those early episodes, they're not as emblematic of what the show became once that show really started to hit."

One of the marked things about both series is that they are made up of true ensembles, and not characters

paying lip service to fill in the non-superhero moments with the leads. Each and every one of them have been just as impacted by the events that have played out as *Arrow* or *Flash* have been.

David Ramsey, who plays John Diggle in *Arrow*, observes, "Season Three ended where the team fell back in line, allowing Oliver to go off into the sunset with Felicity. But Diggle was the only one that really didn't let Oliver off the hook and really held his feet to the fire, so to speak. Diggle sees Oliver's actions as a liability. Diggle was a military guy. If one man hurts the unit, the whole unit suffers. That's Diggle's point of view. Putting Malcolm Merlyn at the head of the League of Assassins is, Diggle thinks, a mistake. Trusting Malcolm before he trusted his team is a mistake. Kidnapping Lyla and leaving his child at home... well, Diggle sees all of this as a mistake. These things hurt the team. It's not just a personal thing. They're not being intelligent strategically. That's what Diggle has a problem with. Those sentiments are echoed in Season Four.

"It's not just about, 'He kidnapped my wife and left my child to die,'" adds



Will Caitlin (Danielle Panabaker) turn to the dark side at some point?



Caitlin and Cisco (Carlos Valdes) will continue to work by Barry (Grant Gustin)'s side.

MEET THE NEW BREED

Introducing *Arrow* and *The Flash*'s future stars



WALLY WEST (Keiynan Lonsdale)

The nephew of Iris West in the comics – not to mention Barry Allen's successor as The Flash – there's no word on whether he's from this reality or Earth 2. Our money's on him being a relative of Iris's come to town, who ends up falling in with Barry.



JAY GARRICK (Teddy Sears)

DC Comics' original Flash was later retconned to come from Earth 2, which is exactly where The CW's version hails from. A recently released image shows that the show is staying faithful to his original tin-helmeted look, in spite of the small matter of it looking ridiculous.



ZOOM (Unknown)

Losing the 'professor' prefix, the staple Flash foe has been confirmed as the main adversary for Season Two, although his identity remains elusive. Will he be played by the returning Tom Cavanagh, or is it Rick Cosnett as an alternative-reality Eddie?



DAMIEN DARHK (Neal McDonough)

Arrow's new big bad, and formerly the rival of Ra's al Ghul for the League of Assassins crown, his arrival is likely to coincide with HIVE's increased prominence, especially considering his involvement with them in the comics.



MR TERRIFIC (Echo Kellum)

Another (relatively) big-name arrival from the comics, the brilliantly named inventor, technological genius and Olympic-winning athlete (he lives up to his name) will work alongside Felicity at Palmer Industries, and bears the distinction of being *Arrow*'s first openly gay character.



JOHN CONSTANTINE (Matt Ryan)

You may recognise this guy. Yes, the star of the short-lived *Constantine* series will be making a one-of-a-kind crossover in an episode of *Arrow*, with Ryan reprising his role. Will The CW get the irritable exorcist's personality right?

Ramsey. "He was pissed. He says, even in that episode, that he understands that Oliver does things a certain way. That's fine. He just can't work with him. It's that matter-of-fact to Diggle. It's going to take some time to mend it. It's not going to be a catastrophic event that brings these men back together; it's going to be a meeting of the hearts, and a commitment to each other, to the team and to the city that really brings them back together. But they will get back together. The bromance will continue. But in the beginning, Team Arrow will be operating without Arrow. That's how they're operating as far as they're concerned, with Oliver Queen leaving for the suburbs. That clearly changes very, very quickly."

Katie Cassidy, whose Laurel Lance became the Black Canary in Season Three, points out, "Right from the beginning it's very much a team, with everyone playing their own role in it. Whether or not they did a good job keeping up with the city is something you're going to find out in the premiere of Season Four. There definitely is a

missing link, but Team Arrow does the best that they can."

While the actress is enjoying kicking ass as the Canary, there is bound to be some sort of emotional reverberation when she learns that her sister, Sara (played by Caity Lotz) is not dead, and will ultimately be on the *Legends Of Tomorrow* team. "That's going to be another emotional roller coaster," she admits, "but I also don't think it's going to be anything negative. I think it'll be somewhat nice. You know, her sister's probably going to be proud of her, but also worried, because she's putting herself in harm's way. I mean, it's a good thing to have your sister back."

And she feels it's good to represent a powerful role model for young girls. "It's so fulfilling and great to hear," Cassidy smiles. "I'm so glad that I can be somebody who can represent women today and stronger women like Laurel. It makes my job much easier to know that other people look up to me."

Willa Holland – the secret identity of Oliver's sister, Thea, who has donned a red hood and joined the team – knows



It looks like Barry's problems are just beginning.



Nyssa (Katrina Law) remains reluctantly under the leadership of Malcolm Merlyn.



Season Three ended with Oliver (Stephen Amell) passing the torch on to others, like Laurel (Katie Cassidy).



By this point, Laurel has fully taken on her sister's former mantle.

SEASON TWO WILL FIND
BARRY MATURING AND
TRYING TO FIND HIS
CONFIDENCE AGAIN

GRANT GUSTIN

What will the new status quo be for Barry Allen in Season Two?



how she feels. The feeling hit her the first time she put on her costume.

"I have this so embedded in my memory," she laughs. "I was walking in it, I felt the clenched feeling in my chest, and then I saw it in the mirror, and tears came down my face out of absolute joy. It was just this thing where I felt like I was waiting for it for a while and it finally came. After a couple of years of hard work, it was something I've always wanted. I've always been obsessed with comic-books since I was a kid. I'm a huge nerd myself, so it was just kind of like an actual dream come true.

"Physically," Holland says, "Thea got stronger last year. Emotionally, I think she became stronger as well, and we're not exactly sure where she's going to be now with the unknown effects of the Lazarus Pit. There is a new sense of vulnerability to her, which is not necessarily a weakness. She's not quite aware of everything just yet, even though she thinks she is. That in itself leaves her slightly vulnerable."

Character evolution is just as prevalent on the fast side of town, as

Candice Patton, who plays Iris West in *The Flash*, points out. "For so much of Season One, Iris was kept in the dark, and it kind of kept her isolated from everyone else," she says. "So she's dealing with feeling isolated and betrayed by her father, her best friend and losing Mason, her mentor; and then losing her boyfriend, Eddie. It was a very emotionally rough season. I feel like, for Iris, moving into Season Two we'll see her kind of begin to grieve those things and then move forward in being an asset to Team Flash. The nice thing is that I haven't gotten to really work with a lot of the actors yet, but now it's fun sitting at the consoles at Star Labs, having an opinion and talking with the other characters.

"At this point," she continues, "I'm not sure exactly how Iris's contribution to the team as a reporter is going to look. But if you look at the idea that Cisco and Caitlin are science and tech, Iris is heart, and she gets people. She's the kind of person who's on the street. She knows how to talk to people and get the scoop and get what's really going on in

Central City, so I think she'll be able to add that kind of impact to the team. Get them information that maybe they can't get on a computer. Sometimes you've got to be face-to-face with people and really get the scoop."

Carlos Valdes, aka Cisco Ramon, sees the character and his journey fairly succinctly: "At his heart, Cisco is a little kid, having that youthful energy and spirit about him. I'd say his biggest struggle – his biggest arc, so to speak – is dealing with maturity and having to struggle with accountability, responsibility and whatnot. Season Two is definitely a continuation of that – of learning how to be responsible. Learning what it takes to be a hero, essentially.

"Plus, obviously there are some biological things happening to Cisco, in his body. Specifically with his head; his head space. There were dreams and visions that he was having around episodes 18 and 20. Obviously, those were used as tools for catching the Reverse Flash. I think fans can expect some more of that and expect, specifically, for Cisco to start dealing

with the changes that are happening in his body and the repercussions of that.”

The biggest question going into Season Two is regarding Tom Cavanagh’s Harrison Wells, and how he is going to be a part of the proceedings given the character’s apparent death. Unfortunately, the actor has nothing to say on the subject.

“This is nothing that I did,” emphasises Cavanagh, “but the writers crafted a character who genuinely had goals that made him good and bad. He needed to protect Barry. He ends up in that relationship, protecting him, and that mentorship which was genuine and that affection bled in too. At the same time, this is a guy trying to get home, and if people needed to die for him to do it, so be it. To him they’d already been dead for 100 years. He had these two goals which were genuine and organic, allowing me as the character to play both those levels without it being a dastardly, sketchy villain. I think we have more of that coming up in Season Two. For an actor, it’s a joy to be able to play two levels that were kind of earned.”

Beyond our heroes (not counting Wells, of course), there will be new villains between both shows. In the case of *Arrow*, actor Neal McDonough will be playing Damien Darhk, former member of the League of Assassins and the leader of HIVE, who will be making a rather prominent appearance in Starling City.

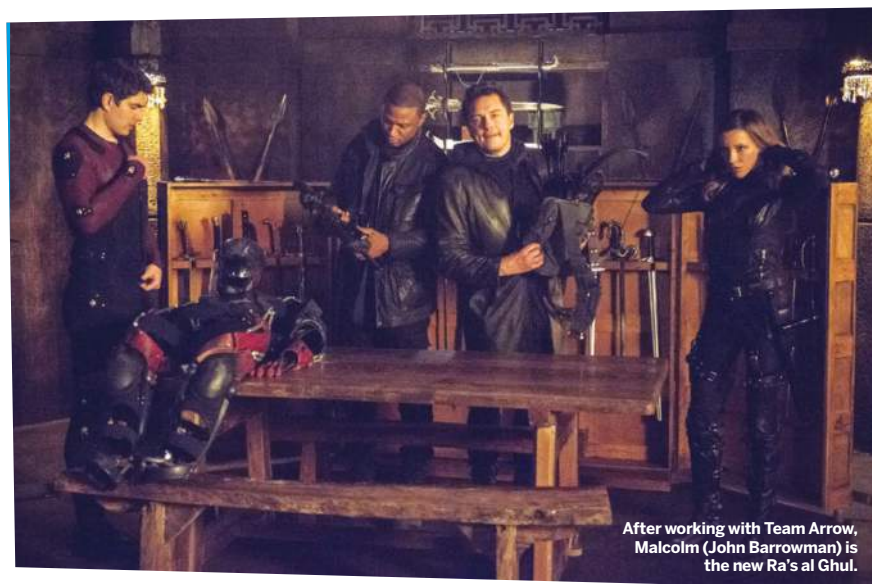
“Obviously with Neal, who is a blessing on the show, we’re going older than the character from the comics,” says Guggenheim. “It’s keeping with our normal philosophy, which is we use the comic-books as a starting off point, not an ending point. Our version of Damien is different from the other kind of big bads we’ve had on the show before. He’s not as stentorian as Ra’s, and he’s not as unhinged as Slade Wilson. He probably has the closest parallel with Malcolm Merlyn, but I think he’s got a malevolence to him that Malcolm did not have. Malcolm would basically always think, ‘I’m doing what I’m doing to save the city,’ whereas Damien is just pure evil. He’s a form of evil we haven’t seen on the show yet. In many ways we’ve always approached our big bads as we wanted them to be the hero of their story. We wanted them not to be evil. This year we decided we’re going to go different; we really want someone who is truly malevolent, and Neal just brings that home.”

“THE FIRST THREE SEASONS CLOSED A CHAPTER FOR OLIVER”
STEPHEN AMELL





Will all be forgiven between Oliver and Diggle?



After working with Team Arrow, Malcolm (John Barrowman) is the new Ra's al Ghul.

Many fans are expecting the gorilla Grodd to be the big bad of Season Two of *The Flash*, but there is no way that could happen. "Grodd can't be the villain," says Kreisberg, "because that would cost all the money in the world. Grodd will definitely be back, I can assure you of that. The kinds of villains we're having and their agendas are different. Last year was about getting the band together and Barry's first initial steps into being The Flash. This year the question is, what does that mean? Everybody in Central City knows about The Flash now. He's becoming a public figure, and the people of Central City live in a universe where people have superpowers. And there are evil people with superpowers. The idea that someone can melt a building is not outlandish anymore. By the same token, they all know there's a saviour out there who has the powers to fight back. Watching Barry deal with the fact that he's becoming a little famous and he's not just the mysterious red streak is something that gets dealt with."

As both Grant Gustin and Stephen Amell head into their respective new

seasons, each are feeling more prepared than ever to handle pretty much anything that's thrown their way.

"Everything about shooting has become easier," Gustin says. "The effects, I know how they work now. We have guest directors all the time, so it's more helpful now that certain things that they're maybe slightly confused about, I understand how we usually shoot them. So that's become easier, for sure. I know what to expect in general when I read a page. I don't just think, 'Oh, this is cool.' I'm like, 'Oh, this is what it's going to take to shoot this episode in this moment,' and it all becomes mentally just less of a stress, because you know what you're in for."

For his part, Amell notes, "I'm better at the action, because I'm better at learning fight scenes fast. I'll tell you, after this hiatus, if Oliver needs to fight with a hockey stick or a baseball bat, we're all good. I don't know if that makes sense... it will." ☞

Arrow and *The Flash* are currently airing on Sky 1 and *Legends Of Tomorrow* begins in January 2016.

ARROW / THE FLASH

WHAT ON EARTH 2?

How the CW-verse got progressively more far-fetched

Initially marketed as being close to *The Dark Knight* by way of its dark-and-gritty tone, *Arrow* got more and more outlandish to the point where few bat an eyelid at the latest oddball to enter *The Flash*'s rogue's gallery. Here's how the realms of plausibility became increasingly blurred:



OLIVER QUEEN'S INSANE WORKOUT REGIME

We get that superheroes need to work out to stay in shape like everybody else, but some of Oliver's fitness maintenance methods need to be seen to be believed. He doesn't even have a spotter, for crying out loud. Still, we're willing to let this one slide. At least it's trying to provide an explanation for something. And who doesn't enjoy having a Felicity Smoak moment every now and again?



MALCOLM MERLYN'S SURVIVAL

After being speared through the gut with an arrow by Oliver in the Season One finale, Dark Archer Malcolm Merlyn somehow lives to fight another day, despite clearly suffering from a serious case of deadness. Maybe his explanation about using some obscure League of Assassins technique for staying alive has legs though. That or John Barrowman actually is Jack Harkness wherever he goes.



MIRAKURU

In all honesty this will probably be invented at some point in the future, but still, the super-soldier serum – sorry, Mirakuru – is essentially bogus science, and therefore another example of *Arrow*'s propensity to depart from reality when it has to. In their defence, at least it has negative side effects, just so it isn't a catch-all solution, and has led to some great story arcs.



THE FLASH

Okay, now we're sceptical. Chemicals don't make lightening something that'll bestow powers on you; it'll just make you that extra bit more dead. This was the moment when The CW-verse officially abandoned all claim to being grounded in any kind of reality. Still, it meant we got *The Flash*, so it's probably worth it.



RESURRECTION

Oliver and Thea both survived injuries that should have killed them, the latter because of the Lazarus Pit (and from the looks of the *Legends Of Tomorrow* trailer, that's how Sara will be coming back too), and the former through just being hard as nails. Apparently being stabbed and kicked off a cliff face isn't such a big deal in this world. Still, Oliver's a badass with a ridiculous pain threshold, so we'll let it go.



TIME TRAVEL

Which brings us to where we are now. *The Flash* and the upcoming *Legends Of Tomorrow* are both heavily centred around being able to travel in time, as well as featuring the apparently ageless immortal Vandal Savage. We're officially living in a fantasy world now.

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IT MAY BE CATEGORISED AS SCI-FI, BUT THE WORLD OF HUMANS ISN'T AS FAR AWAY AS YOU MAY HAVE THOUGHT. WE FOUND OUT FROM THE CAST ON THE SET OF CHANNEL 4'S NEW DRAMA ABOUT WHY YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR...



IN A LARGE, TASTEFULLY DECORATED HOME IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, A FAMILY SIT DOWN TO LUNCH. THEY'RE JUST YOUR AVERAGE FAMILY – A LITTLE BETTER LOOKING, PERHAPS, AND

affluent enough to afford what seems to be an au pair, but otherwise you wouldn't look at them twice. So you'd never notice that the au pair is a robot.

Well, she isn't, of course. She's *Sherlock* actress Gemma Chan. But in the world of *Humans*, Channel 4's major new sci-fi series, she is a Synthetic Human, aka a Synth. Synths are just "another household appliance, like a toaster," in Tom Goodman-Hill's words, the actor who plays father of the family Joe. Imagine if Siri could do the washing up.

So if you could have a completely human-looking piece of technology in your home, raising your children and never sleeping, would you? And what problems would that create?

Those are the questions asked in *Humans*, and the cast have been asking them since shooting started. So we settled down to talk technophobia with the cast.

"It's not sci-fi anymore!" laughs *The IT Crowd*'s Katherine Parkinson, who plays Joe's wife Laura. "I think that's why [*Humans*] feels so current and terrifying, because it's happening."

"For me," says *Utopia* actor Neil Maskell, who plays Detective Sergeant Pete Drummond, "The series isn't so much 'What if there were robots?' It's more like 'What if the robots that we already have

looked like humans?' Your iPhone to some extent is a form of AI, and we're dealing with it on a day-to-day basis."

Humans is set in a parallel present, a "hyper-real" world just like ours, but with the addition of Synths. Some of them are NHS carers, some are home-help models, and inevitably, there are the sexbots. "There's a sex-robot hotel in Korea right now. It's happening!" laughs *Merlin*'s Colin Morgan, who plays the mysterious Leo.

If our conversations with the cast are anything to go by, this is a show that Will get you thinking – and possibly make you afraid of your own phone.

"We already anthropomorphise Roombas, the hoovers" Morgan laughs. "If you go to Amazon and read people's reviews, it's not 'The Roomba does this' it's 'He's great, I love him, he does this...' They're already attributing human qualities... So when these things are in your life and they're giving you the impression of love and the impression of doing things for you, what does that do to you?"

"I think it was Stephen Hawking who recently said that if you do get a proper artificial intelligence, they will overtake mankind," Morgan continues. "We evolved over millions of years; they evolved over





maybe decades. Such a fast period of time. I think it's scary that that technology, if it could develop itself, it would out-develop us."

Humans is a British version of the Swedish show *Real Humans*, and although it covers many stories (including William Hurt as the man who helped invent Synths), the drama really kicks off when Joe decides to buy a Synth to help take the weight off his overwhelmed wife Laura.

If there's discord between Joe and Laura, then it's not visible in Parkinson and Goodman-Hill. They have an easy, married-couple chemistry, finishing each other's thoughts and teasing each other's answers.

"[Joe's] just thinking of it as getting a new dishwasher," Goodman-Hill says, "it doesn't occur to him that there's another woman in the house... It makes Joe and Laura look inwards the moment that they come out of everything else."

"Which is the central idea of the whole argument," Goodman-Hill continues. "If you take away human activity you're left with an existential crisis."

There's something very strange about discussing murderous AI and existential

crises in the innocuous setting of a teenage girl's bedroom. Below us, outside the window, a mix of uniformed and plain-clothed police officers, all part of Drummond's Special Technologies Task Force, mill about on the front lawn. Inside, it's all minutely realised domesticity. Outside, darker things are creeping in. It feels like a metaphor for the whole show.

"At the beginning of the series the work is quite boring," Maskell says about Drummond's police force. "It's mainly Synths that have been vandalised or smashed up or stolen." He describes Drummond as "quite a thwarted man" who is drowning in technology that he doesn't want.

Maskell is clearly interested in the issues raised by the show, and how the characters treat Synths. He's also alarmingly insightful: the sort of man you could put the world to rights with over a pint.

"Historically, during the slave trade," he says, "people were dehumanised. And what you see [in *Humans*] is a modern-day reflection of that, or evocation of that, that I think raises difficult moral questions about our own complicity in the slave trade that's existing today. Is the person who made your Gap t-shirt a real human being like you are? Do they have feelings like you do? Because whether you like it or not, you're switching that bit of your own humanity and empathy off to just get that t-shirt for a tenner."

“
IF YOU GET A
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MANKIND
COLIN MORGAN

According to Morgan, his Leo is "a hunted man, he's a man on the run, a man on a mission. He comes from a very troubled, complicated past, which becomes clear as the series goes on. There are a lot of questions over him, there are a lot of question marks for him, and that's a huge part of what his drive is, to get answers. He needs to know who he is." Morgan looks like he's been running, pairing heavy stubble with a stained hoodie and sweat-damp hair. Only his smile reminds you that it's just a costume, and he's not really a fugitive.

Gemma Chan's Synth Anita is almost as closely shrouded in secrecy as Leo is. "She's really an enigma when you first meet her," Chan says. "I think quite quickly the

One of the more recognisable names among the cast is William Hurt.



Merlin star Colin Morgan and Ivanno Jeremiah also feature.



The *IT Crowd*'s Katherine Parkinson plays a mother and wife with a Synth in her household.

audience will think things aren't quite as they seem with her... You don't know if she's a threat to the family or if she's got her own agenda. It's been really interesting to play. There's lots of levels. There's what's going on on the surface, but there's a lot of other things going on beneath which will be revealed later in the series."

For Chan, the series posed a whole host of difficulties that the 'human' cast didn't have to deal with. Luckily, she had Synth School to teach her how to be a robot. "These things are ultimately machines and they run on battery power, so every movement has to have an economy and a grace to it. Just things like putting down a glass. We'd put it down and maybe not take the shortest route,

whereas one of these things just putting down a glass would take the direct route and it would have to land perfectly because these things have perfect eye sight, there'd be no wobbling of the glass." She can switch into Synth mode eerily quickly, demonstrating moves in a way that immediately sets off alarm bells in your head, telling you that you're looking at something not quite right.

Goodman-Hill was certainly impressed by the "mind-blowing" robot acting in the show, saying with relief that there were no "cocked heads and all that nonsense."

"It creates something much more real and spookier," Parkinson agrees.

Realism seems to be the key word for the show, despite all the robots. "I'd say it's not traditional sci-fi," Chan says. "It's very real, it's very grounded, there's humour, there's warmth, and there's also elements of thriller in it... in the same way that something like *The Walking Dead* has zombies in it, but the zombies are the least of it. It's about the struggle for existence really, and how people are getting along in this world... it's very much about [the Synths] and how we're getting on and what it means to be human."

So what can we expect? Maskell gives it some thought. "It is an exciting and compelling bit of sci-fi, if that's what you're looking for, it has philosophical and humanitarian questions that are raised by it, and it opens up debate. It works on both levels," he cringes, "to use a phrase I hate."

Humans is now available on Blu-ray and DVD, with Series Two airing next year.

HOW TO TELL IF YOUR FRIEND IS A ROBOT

HERE'S A HANDY GUIDE TO DISCERNING WHETHER ONE OF YOUR NEAREST AND DEAREST IS, IN FACT, AI



1 ASK THEM TO DO SOMETHING RIDICULOUS

Robots are designed to be loyal to the point of subservience. With this in mind, ask them to do something crazy. If they are human they will tell you where to go.

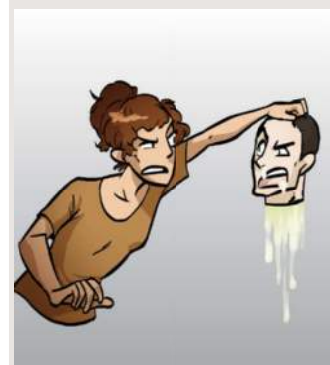
As seen in: Bicentennial Man



2 MAKE HIM TAKE THE VOIGHT-KAMPFF TEST

Als will never tell you they aren't human. Avoid this possibility by making them take the Voight-Kampff test to tell biology from bullshit.

As seen in: Blade Runner



3 SEE IF THEY BLEED

Robots don't bleed. Try accidentally/on purpose cutting them on the arm. If they're a robot, he'll bleed milk (we hope it's milk). If it's blood, then you have some apologising to do.

As seen in: Alien



4 PERFORM AN ELABORATE STRIPEASE

Yes, you read correctly. Certain types of robots can't commute with overt displays of virility. Before long heads will be exploding all over the shop.

As seen in: Austin Powers



5 ATTACK WITH ROBOTS

Robots see other robots as equals. Any sane person will run to the hills when faced with a homicidal robot. If they stand still, then they're not real.

As seen in: Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey



6 LOOK FOR LOOKALIKES

Creating robots is a lengthy and expensive business, so they won't look too different. One way of telling if your friend is a robot is if they have a strangely large amount of lookalikes.

As seen in: Battlestar Galactica



Hopefully *Humans* will fill the gap left on Channel 4 by *Utopia*.



Gemma Chan describes the series as 'traditional sci-fi'.



Actor Tom Goodman-Hill likens Synths in this reality to a "household appliance".

SECRET AGENT SOLDIER, SPY

WHILE CAPTAIN AMERICA WAS MIA, HIS COMMANDING OFFICER AGENT CARTER WAS OFF CATCHING BAD GUYS AND DISMANTLING THE PATRIARCHY IN NYC. WE TALK TO HAYLEY ATWELL ABOUT PEGGY'S UK RETURN AND WHAT'S IN STORE FOR SEASON TWO...

THE YEAR IS 1946, AND WORLD WAR II'S STAR-SPANGLED HERO CAPTAIN AMERICA IS FROZEN IN A BOMBER PLANE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC. PEGGY Carter, however, is back in New York City, uncovering conspiracies, catching criminals and fighting the patriarchal ranks of the Strategic Scientific Reserve.

The first season of *Agent Carter*, which aired at the beginning of the year in the US, went down wonderfully. Thanks to, ahem, various other TV-viewing methods, fans from all over the world have been scattering their love for the eight-part series – and the woman herself – across the internet. The show's leading lady Hayley Atwell has been receiving a non-stop avalanche of fan enthusiasm on Twitter and Instagram since January.

"Peggy is such a great character to play, but to also be able to have a positive effect, without sounding too Pollyanna and goody-two-shoes about it, it's been very humbling," Atwell tells us. "Travelling to these conventions and meeting fans of the show and seeing

"PEGGY IS A GREAT CHARACTER TO PLAY, BUT TO ALSO BE ABLE TO HAVE SUCH A POSITIVE IMPACT IS VERY HUMBLING"
HAYLEY ATWELL

that there are young people who are quoting Peggy, going 'I know my value, anyone else's opinion doesn't really matter', and getting lots of letters from girls going, 'How do I promote a healthy relationship with my body and my physical appearance, and what would Peggy do?' It's been just lovely and completely unexpected, and something that I strive to do. I think it's just a natural knock-on effect of playing a role like her."

Atwell is no stranger to cosplay, seeing as a fair chunk of Peggy fans rock up to conventions in full power-suit attire. "It's quite surreal!" she says. "And also a lot of the time they look a bit like Paddington Bear, with the red hat and the blue jacket, which is really funny. It's really charming, because they know more about Peggy than I do! They are very loyal and really innocent as well, again because she's a nice character. If she was the bitch or the sex bomb villain or something then it might create a kind of different fan base. But my fans are awesome! They are lovely, and a

lot of them make their own costumes, they're very skilled. They're very good at the old sewing."

All of this – the Twitter love, the fan letters, the cosplay – makes it even more strange that the UK is only just getting to see the first season. FOX UK picked up the series in June shortly after Season Two was announced by ABC, the US network that airs both *Agent Carter* and its sister show *Agents Of SHIELD*. Channel 4 has acted as the latter's UK broadcaster for the last two years, but made it clear very early on that it wasn't interested in picking up *Agent Carter* – perhaps a consequence of *Agents Of SHIELD*'s less than stellar first-season performance. Why has it taken so long to bring Peggy home?

"That's a really good question!" says Atwell. "There's been a big campaign online with people going, 'Come on, Britain! Get your arse into gear!' and I don't know. I think it might be something to do with people wanting to see the whole season... I think TV broadcasters wanted to see the full

A black and white photograph of Agent Peggy Carter. She is wearing a red fedora with a blue and white band, a black trench coat, and white gloves. She is holding a handgun in her right hand, pointing it towards the camera. Her expression is serious and focused. The background is a bright, slightly overexposed outdoor setting with a metal structure visible on the right.

thing before they committed to it. It is very different to *Agents Of SHIELD*, and they might have expected it to be very similar, and therefore was it a relevant show to bring over? But yeah, it's a good question. I'm not privy to it. Silly broadcasters.

"[I had messages from fans saying] 'When's it coming?' And my mum! She was asking, 'Are we ever going to see this show? Did you really film it?' It's always nice to bring something back to your home country, to bring it home. To be flying the flag for the Brits in the US is great, but it's nice that I get to show off and go, 'This is what I've been doing for the last six months.'"

While British Marvel fans were waiting patiently for any kind of Season One

news, everyone else had their fingers crossed for a Season Two announcement. "I was living a very odd life for a few months waiting to find out," says Atwell. "Because of the time difference, when they announced there was going to be a new season I was fast asleep here in London, so I woke up to the whole world knowing before I did, and messages from Marvel going, 'Answer your phone!' I couldn't see it not happening because of the online support; the ratings seemed to be good. There was nothing to be ashamed of. It wasn't a terrible flop. I thought they would at least give us another go to kind of make amends and make a better season, and maybe tackle a couple of the problems that critics had with the first one."

Agent Carter's second season hasn't started filming just yet, but Atwell is able to treat us to some juicy titbits. "I can tell you that it's set in LA, it's a year later, and I imagine it being a little bit *LA Confidential*-esque. I imagine that it will be darkly glamorous. This was the time of unsolved crimes like the Black Dahlia and organised crime, and this incredibly attractive but toxic mix of celebrity, fame, money and glamour in Hollywood. She spent the first season grieving over Steve Rogers, so I think in the second one there will possibly be a new love interest, but whether that will be Daniel Sousa [played by Enver Gjokaj] or someone completely new is up to the writers. They are working on that now. But I think also Jarvis will be there, Howard will be there, Angie will be there. There will be returning characters, the ones that were popular from the first season, as well as establishing some new ones."

One relationship that left an impression on fans of the first season was that between Peggy and her waitress neighbour Angie Martinelli (Lyndsy Fonseca). Viewers fancied the pair as both best friends and potential lovers, something that hasn't escaped Atwell.

"They really shipped it! They were like, 'Can they go on a date?' and I was like, 'Okay! Why not?' They loved it! I think it's also partly to do with how it's very refreshing to see a female relationship on screen that's not competitive and bitchy and not just talking about the men. What's the test? The Bechdel Test? [a scene passes the Bechdel Test if two or more named female characters talk about something besides a man at any time. Peggy and Angie's first on-screen conversation together passes with

flying colours.] Exactly. And I think there's a little bit of that between Angie and her, and it's really different! I mean, sadly so, but it makes it quite refreshing on screen. There's a fondness for each other that is based on mutual care and consideration for each other's needs and feelings, and they help each other out. I think there's something really powerful about having two women depicted like that on screen. So I'm all for them. I fully support the cause."

One of the luxuries of being an *Agent Carter* fan is knowing that Peggy can never die – or not in the series at least. We've seen her as a young officer in *Captain America: The First Avenger*, and as an older woman in her 90s in *Captain America: The Winter Solider*. As far as the series is concerned, Peggy is safe in every season finale.

"Jumping about [in time] is a quite surreal experience, because you don't often get that as an actor. You don't get to revisit the character for years and years and years, and also in different time frames in a kind of surreal world. But we know from the first one and we know from the second one that she lives to a ripe old age of 97, and we also know from *The Winter Solider*



"SEASON TWO IS SET IN LOS ANGELES, AND I CAN IMAGINE IT BEING A BIT LIKE LA CONFIDENTIAL. IT WILL BE DARKLY GLAMOROUS"
HAYLEY ATWELL



The actions of Howard Stark (Dominic Cooper) were at the centre of Season One.



Sousa (Enver Gjokaj) is the only one in the office to treat Peggy equally.



The relationship, wit and quips between Peggy (Hayley Atwell) and Jarvis (James D'Arcy) are a highlight.



Don't mess with Peggy. She's all action.

[DATA: EXPUNGED] Meet Agent Carter's new players...



EDWIN JARVIS (James D'Arcy)

Howard Stark's trusty butler and Peggy's ally Jarvis is an English family man with a dry sense of humour. He makes quite an impact in the MCU, as Tony Stark names his famous AI after him.



JACK THOMPSON (Chad Michael Murray)

As a war veteran, an SSR agent and a bit of a chauvinist, Thompson is both working with Peggy and working against her. He likes to get the job done, and is partial to theatrics in the work place.



DANIEL SOUSA (Enver Gjokaj)

A serious leg injury during the war left Agent Sousa shackled to his SSR desk job. His experiences with prejudice draws him closer to Peggy, but she scorns him for trying to fight her battles for her.



ROGER DOOLEY (Shea Whigham)

The chief of the Strategic Scientific Reserve keeps the ship running smoothly. He's a diplomatic leader, but it's still the Forties, so he mostly has Peggy completing paperwork and fetching coffee.



ANGIE MARTINELLI (Lyndsy Fonseca)

Peggy's bubbly neighbour and post-war BFF works as a waitress at the L&L Automat, where she's subjected to arse-slapping and lousy tips, but she dreams of making it big on Broadway.



DOTTIE UNDERWOOD (Bridget Regan)

Dottie, another of Peggy's neighbours, comes across as a small-town girl from Iowa, but unlike Angie she may not be who she seems. Dottie has secrets, and Peggy's going to find out what they are.

that she had a family. There's children in a frame on her bedside table, so I kind of feel like those two films were bookends of her life, and the series fills in the details of what makes her a lot more well-rounded, richer, deeper and more interesting, and that's what I've liked so much about playing her in the series, that we have time to flesh her out a bit more. We have time to show her vulnerabilities and humour, as well as her strength and resourcefulness. It makes her a bit more relatable."

A lot of Atwell's enthusiasm for time-jumping comes from her love of the Forties era and the strong celebrity women that came with it. "I'm so in love with people like Katherine Hepburn and Bette Davis; these women who had gravitas. They were formidable, notorious, shocking, brilliant, bright, opinionated, loud and funny, and I'm going, 'Where have they gone? Where are those living legends?' I know we have a couple now: we have one in Cate Blanchett I think, and a few other people. But they lived in quite a dangerous and over-exposed world. It's very seductive and very attractive to me. I kind of looked at some of their work when I was working on Peggy to just create that air of confidence. There's something quite regal about Peg. She knows exactly who she is, and



Neal McDonough reprised his role of Dum Dum Dugan from *Captain America: The First Avenger*.

Howard with one of his many conquests. Will we ever meet the future Mrs Stark?



she doesn't apologise for who she is, and she also doesn't necessarily take herself too seriously either. So I was looking at things like *Bringing Up Baby*, *Jezebel* and *All About Eve*, those kinds of films."

Despite her enthusiasm for the era, she isn't as familiar with the comic-book source material. "I'm yet to read a comic," she confesses. "I feel awful! I feel so bad, but I also felt that because I'd heard a little bit about where Peggy was at in terms of the comics, we kind of felt that we were starting from scratch. I also didn't want too much to live up to. I wanted to find a way of making a fresh, new, modern interpretation of this Forties character, and I think if I'd looked at the comics it would have bogged me down too much by what was in there rather than bringing my own ideas to her. So that's my excuse!"

Agent Carter's first season practically reeks of Forties glamour and sophistication. Like Hepburn, Peggy has her Spencer Tracy in the form of Howard Stark (Dominic Cooper)'s rent-a-butler Edwin Jarvis, played by James D'Arcy.

"We'd love to be compared to Tracy and Hepburn!" enthuses Atwell. "This is a family show, an entertainment show. It doesn't have the sophistication that they do. They're legends. But we are shamelessly trying to copy their

relationship, because it's so brilliant. It's always Jarvis's lines [that are my favourites]. Like, 'I've got a very thrilling job of rearranging the spice rack when I get home.' It's all very dry. He's like, 'I'm very partial to some sticky toffee pudding.' I think he tried to get 'spotted dick' in there, but the Americans wouldn't allow it because they didn't know what it was. So it's all of his lines. James is a very gifted improviser, so he comes up with little bits and bobs and gets them in there, in the script as well. It's a collaboration, which is great."

After appearing as Peggy Carter in both *Captain America* films, *Avengers: Age Of Ultron*, two episodes of *Agents Of SHIELD*, the Marvel one-shot *Agent Carter* and, of course, her own series, as well as being set to pop up in *Ant-Man*, Atwell is all over the MCU. She might not be an Avenger, or even have superhuman powers, but she's definitely one of the most prominent Marvel on-screen presences.

"It's great, because you feel like you're a part of this big Marvel family. It's a huge compliment. The biggest compliment is getting re-employed by someone, because it makes you go, 'Okay, I did a good job for them the first time round.' I've just been having a laugh, really, meeting lots of friends. I gate-crashed the set of *Captain*

America: Civil War in Atlanta a couple of weeks ago, and a lot of the crew had worked on my show, so it was nice to see everyone and reconnect.

"I'd love Chris Evans to come back [for *Agent Carter*]! He says, 'Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!' but I don't think he will. He's probably too expensive. I'd love Toby Jones to come back. He'd be excellent. Rory Kinnear would be a great guest appearance. Helen McCrory would be incredible. I'm a massive fan of people like Juliet Stevenson and Fiona Shaw, and those kinds of really brilliantly dynamic women."

Even if you're not too familiar with the Marvel universe, and just fancy a spot of good, old-fashioned spy fun, Atwell insists that *Agent Carter* could still be for you. "I'd say the first thing

is that you don't have to be a part of the Marvel universe to follow it or to understand it, which is great, because it means she exists in her own entity," she explains. "I would describe her as someone who is resourceful and dynamic living in a time that doesn't recognise her for her full skill set, and I would say that she uses her sex appeal, but she doesn't depend on it. Her wit and her warmth and her intelligence are just as important in terms of getting what she needs and achieving her goals. And then I think it's a story of a girl who knows her value and knows her worth, and she's just waiting for the rest of the world to catch up with her." 

Marvel's *Agent Carter* is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.

"HER WIT, WARMTH AND INTELLIGENCE ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF ACHIEVING HER GOALS"
HAILEY ATWELL

Jarvis has to deal with Stark getting into all kinds of trouble.



Power suit. Red lippy. Shotgun. Standard practise.

La Mode du Jour

Explore the world of 20th century fashion with our silver screen style guide...

Statement lipstick

Red lipstick adds professionalism and lets your oppressors know that you're not afraid.

Button-down blouse

A silk blouse is stylish yet practical. The bigger the shoulder pads the better.



High-waisted skirt
Add a jacket to this feminine look when you take your place as CEO.

Agent Peggy Carter



Fashionista eyepatch
Intimidate your work force with a stylish eyepatch and sculpted brows.

Weapons belt
A belt with a leather holster makes fighting the patriarchy almost easy.

Skin-tight one-piece
Three words: lycra, lycra, lycra! Show off what you've got and own it.



Big barnet
Sleek, frizzy, long, short... just make sure your 'do reflects the real you.

High street belt
An on-trend statement belt will break up that one-piece perfectly.



Beautiful ball gown
Exude confidence and sophistication wherever you go with this regal look.

Franky

The Phantom

Jessica Rabbit



Hippy-chic blouse
A loose, detailed blouse says, "I care about the planet, but not your problems."

Double-breasted jacket
Comfortable, practical and cool as hell, it doesn't get better than this.

Bold harem pants
Floaty harem pants are comfortable and make kicking asses a lot less effort.



Colourful focus piece
Liven up a dull black suit with a flirty red tie to make your look pop.

Steampunk helmet
This season, less is more. Less of your face, that is. Hide a scowl behind vintage headwear.



Trench coat
A good, old-fashioned trench coat is never out of style. Make it your own.

Marion Ravenwood

The Rocketeer

The Spirit



SOMETHING **WICKED** THIS WAY COMES

THE ADAPTATION OF SUSANNA CLARKE'S HIT FANTASY NOVEL JONATHAN STRANGE & MR NORRELL TRADES MIDDLE-EARTH, WESTEROS AND HOGWARTS FOR 19TH-CENTURY YORKSHIRE. WE TALK TO DIRECTOR TOBY HAYNES AND WRITER PETER HARNESS ABOUT BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE...

IN THE FANTASY WORLD, MAGIC USUALLY COMES IN THE FORM OF CURSES, WIZARD'S HATS, WITCHCRAFT AND DRAGON SLAYING. THE BBC'S LATEST DABBLE INTO MAGIC

comes wrapped in a disguise of powdered wigs, double-breasted tailcoats and afternoon tea. The BBC's seven-part adaptation of Susanna Clarke's classic novel *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* takes spells, curses and enchantments into 19th-century Yorkshire. When Mr Norrell, an upright Englishman and the first practical magician of the Revival of English Magic, crosses paths with Jonathan Strange, the happy-go-lucky second magician, both their lives – and the practice of English magic – are changed forever.

Director Toby Haynes was very familiar with the story before taking on the task of helming the project, having read the 1,000-page plus novel when it was first released.

"I remember walking into [a book shop] and seeing it up there on the shelf, pulling it off and having a look and starting to read the first page," Haynes tells us. "Basically, I was supposed to be doing my Christmas shopping, but I completely forgot. An hour had passed, and I was still reading. And then, very fortunately and completely unconnectedly, my mum had bought it for me for that Christmas. I was away on holiday in France, and I was just so delighted that it was one of my presents, and I read it by a fireside in a kind of chateau-y castle, which was the perfect setting for it, cold but warm by a fire. It completely absorbed me, and everybody was so annoyed with me for not talking to them, because I had my nose in a book the entire holiday."

Peter Harness, who wrote the series, was also a big fan. "I think it's my favourite book," he says. "I've done quite a few adaptations recently, and I decided I'd give that a rest for a little while. But when the chance came to do *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*, I couldn't possibly turn it down... I would have loved to keep on doing it forever. It was just a wonderful world and a fantastic book."

When the BBC announced that they were planning an adaptation, Haynes didn't land his dream project by chance; he actively pursued it as soon as he finished the book. At the time, the film rights to the novel belonged to New Line Cinema, who snatched it up while it was still a manuscript. But years passed with nothing being made, and the possibility of a New Line *Strange & Norrell* film looked more and more unlikely.

With the film rights to the novel slowly gathering dust, it became a not completely unserious running joke between Haynes and his agent that Haynes would be directing the adaptation. "At first people would titter and laugh at the impossibility of this," says Haynes, "but the tables turned after *Sherlock* went out and became a bit of a TV phenomenon with the death of Sherlock in my episode ['The Reichenbach Fall']... my agent got a knock on his door from his boss saying, 'It's time we talked about *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* and Toby Haynes.' That was a beautiful moment for us to have waited that long and then get the meeting."

"I've been very lucky that I've been able to work on all the shows that I've wanted to from long into my childhood, like *Doctor Who*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *The Musketeers* – all of those things are things that I've coveted



The Gentleman (Marc Warren) works his magic for Mr Norrell (Eddie Marsan).



Drawlight (Vincent Franklin) and Lascelles (John Heffernan) don't get magic.

and wanted to do and have great enthusiasm for. *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* was my first adult experience of reading something and thinking, 'This is amazing'. This would be my dream job, to be the adaptor of this or to bring it to screen, and it just seemed like this impossible thing... They said it couldn't be done. They said it wasn't adaptable, but we adapted it! We were at a point with the BBC where they just trusted me as a filmmaker, Peter Harness as a writer, as a team, Nick Hirschhorn as a fantastic producer... We had a lot of trust from the BBC, not a lot of interference, and we could do it the way we wanted to, and as long as we brought it to screen intact, it was our mandate, and we were very lucky to have that."

Before getting on board with the series, back when it still looked like the book was going to get the Hollywood movie treatment, Haynes admits that he was slightly worried about what someone else would do with the story. "I couldn't see it as a film, which was why I differed from the beginning," he tells us. "In my mind, it was never going to be a film. I always thought it would be a mistake to try and mill it down into a two-and-a-half-hour or three-hour film. It's just not in the material to do that with it, so yeah, I think it was pretty clear."

"What I was getting known for [at the time] was achieving very ambitious storylines and visualising things for very long-standing series like *Doctor Who*, and handling big episodes of *Sherlock*, so I was getting to a place in my career where I was saying that this is what we should be doing, this is the pinnacle of the kind of TV-making

that I'm trying to do, bringing cinema into television and to make television be as big and ambitious as it can possibly be, and *Jonathan Strange* absolutely embodies that."

FANS OF SUSANNA CLARKE'S BOOK WILL HAVE THEIR OWN IMAGE OF JONATHAN STRANGE AND GILBERT NORRELL IN THEIR HEADS ALREADY. HOWEVER, THE TV SERIES

is likely to replace those images with Bertie Carvel and Eddie Marsan in a wig. Weirdly, Haynes admits that the actors weren't at all what he imagined the characters to be, but they were still somehow perfect.

"As an adaptor, you have to let go of what your pure visions of the characters in the book are when you are reading it," Haynes explains. "You need some of that vision, but you need to be flexible enough to be able to get through. We're making this right now. These are the people available, and these are the people who are right. Who are you going to get? Whenever you cast a film you're rolling a dice... It's a game of chance. It's about the right person for that role walking through that door at that very moment... We're very lucky that the right people walked through the door at the right time.

"I feel that Eddie isn't as old as I pictured Norrell when I read the book, but he completely embodied Norrell... he's a very strapped-in person. He's internalising everything, and Eddie Marsan, who [I believe to be] one of the greatest character actors of our age, is completely adapted to playing that kind of person with that internal tension. He just displayed that in the casting, he was amazing.

"Bertie, I believe, is the only person who managed to play Strange the way that I pictured him in the book, although he



Norrell's manservant Childermass (Enzo Cilenti) has advice.



Jonathan Strange wants to be a real magician.



physically wasn't how I imagined Strange, as he's famously red-haired and cadaverous, and as tall as Bertie is, he's certainly not cadaverous. But he embodied Strange in his very being, and that's what a great actor can do. I believe Bertie is this wonderful actor who is coming to prominence now, and feels like a kind of undiscovered superstar in that way. He's been blowing people's socks off on stage, and to now bring him onto television at a time that he's really coming to the floor, and I think Strange really displays his great strengths as an actor. It's very exciting."

Another actor who continues to amaze Haynes is Marc Warren, who was cast as the Gentleman with the Thistle-Down Hair, a fairy who is summoned by Mr Norrell towards the start of the story to bring a client's lover back from the dead.

"I never imagined the Gentleman to be Marc Warren... He wanted to do this desperately. He read the book and he knocked on the door of our casting director endlessly, and wouldn't let up. I think it took us about four months to get round to seeing him. We just thought, 'Ah Marc Warren, he usually plays a cheeky chappie, he's usually a geezer.' I just couldn't see him going from geezer to Gentleman... and yet when he came in and played it, I was absolutely sceptical, but he put in the most incredible casting that I've ever done. He completely embodied the Gentleman. It was an intense performance, a studied performance, an intelligent performance, and it was very exciting moment. I just thought, 'We've got our man.' It was the case with almost every character, with Childermass [Enzo Cilenti],

"I THINK IT'S A RARE EXAMPLE OF SOMETHING TURNING OUT JUST AS YOU'D HOPE IT WOULD. WE'VE HAD A WONDERFUL TIME"
PETER HARNES



The Gentleman and Mr Norrell are in cahoots.



The practical magicians of the Revival of Magic.



Strange travels across England to meet Norrell.

with Lascelles [John Heffernan], with Drawlight [Vincent Franklin].

"I feel like, in a way, that the *Harry Potter* series is a wonderful slice of some of the great character actors of the last ten years on display for everybody to see. I think with *Strange* we've got a moment where we have some of the finest actors who will be those great character actors of the future. They are all superb actors. We were blessed with our cast... I think it will be one of those casts that people will remember."

The friendship between Strange and Norrell plays a huge part in the book, and is something fans are most looking forward to seeing on screen, so it was vital that Marsan and Carvel had chemistry.

"I think the irony is that [Marsan and Carvel] are actually the opposite of their characters in the book," Haynes tells us. "Eddie is an incredibly instinctive actor. He doesn't like to prepare. He had studied the script, he knows his lines, but beyond that he doesn't prepare emotionally. He doesn't want to rehearse that much. He doesn't want to lose the spark that he's harbouring inside.

Whereas Bertie, he comes from the stage. He studies the particular. He likes to know where his props are. He likes to rehearse a lot. He likes to get it just right. In a way, Eddie is best in take one or two, and Bertie gets great in take four, five or six... It was very amusing, especially because Mr Norrell is supposed to be studied and nurtures power, and Strange is nature and instinct."

As so much of the crew were huge fans of the novel, the series ended up being a work of love, and Harness doesn't think it could have turned out better. "I'm extremely happy. It's been such a colossal labour of love for me and for Toby and for Nick, the producer. We've worked on it so hard together, and we had such fun with this collaboration. We've devoted so much to it. After the last three years, it would be heartbreaking if we weren't happy with it. But I think it's a rare example of something turning out just as you'd hope it would. We've had a wonderful time. I'm very keen to see what people make of it."

Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.



The Gentleman's power is mighty and plentiful.

BATTLE OF THE WANDS

Who puts the 'wiz' in Triwizard Tournament? Who tregunas your mekoides? Who shall pass? Let's get ready to conjure!

QUARTER FINAL



Dark Willow v Merlin

'The Last Dragon lord' sounds cool, but Merlin isn't prepared to fight dirty. Dark Willow, however, turns people inside-out.



Harry Potter v Robert Angier

Angier may have his cloning ability, but Harry draws his wand and stupefies him faster than you can say 'Quidditch'.



SEMI FINAL



Gandalf the Grey v Harry Potter

Harry's greatest strength is love, but love won't help against power and experience. Gandalf came to smoke pipe weed and blow shit up.

WINNER: Gandalf the Grey



Dark Willow v Harry Potter

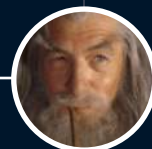
Dark Willow is a fire cracker, but it only takes Harry reminding her of the importance of friendship to spark her downfall.



Gandalf the Grey v Doctor Strange

Strange tries to summon a demon. Gandalf orders it back to the shadows. Strange is confused. Gandalf drinks ale.

QUARTER FINAL



Gandalf the Grey v The Illusionist

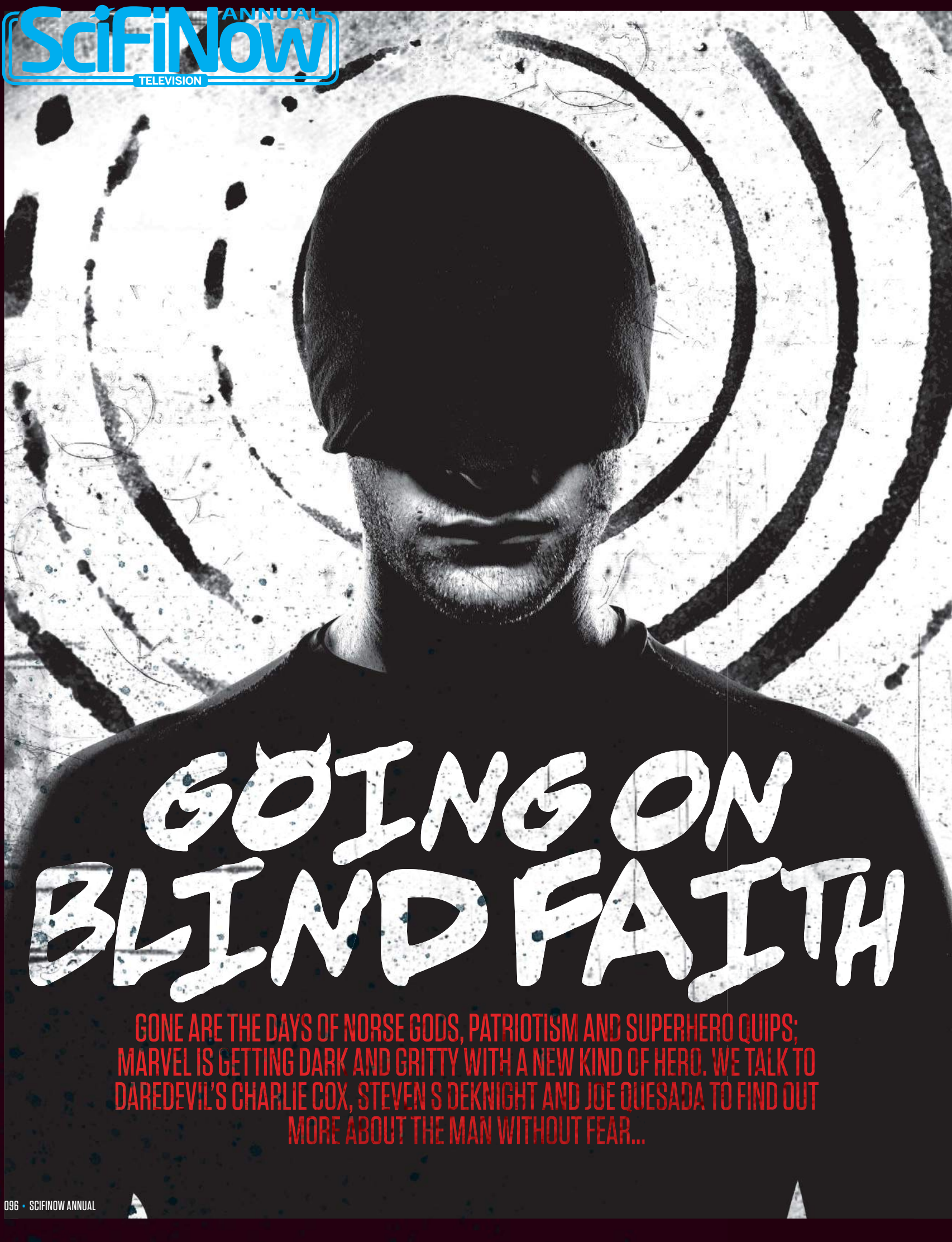
The Illusionist's old-timey magic brings a smile to even the sternest of faces, but it won't do shit against a Balrog. Gandalf wins.



Doctor Strange v Miss Price

Miss Price has the smarts, but an army of bewitched clothes and a flying bed won't cut it against the Sorcerer Supreme.





GOING ON BLIND FAITH

GONE ARE THE DAYS OF NORSE GODS, PATRIOTISM AND SUPERHERO QUIPS; MARVEL IS GETTING DARK AND GRITTY WITH A NEW KIND OF HERO. WE TALK TO DAREDEVIL'S CHARLIE COX, STEVEN S DEKNIGHT AND JOE QUESADA TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR...

IT'S PROBABLY FAIR TO SAY THAT THE RECEPTION TO MARK STEVEN JOHNSON'S 2003 DAREDEVIL MOVIE WAS MIXED AT BEST. IF

Matt Murdock was at all on the radars of comic-book movie fans before, he certainly isn't now. However, he's likely to make a comeback after fans get a load of his new Netflix series. So far, Marvel Cinematic Universe stories have been fun and colourful family entertainment. It looks like that's about to change, however, as Drew Goddard and Steven S DeKnight are taking Marvel to a new level. *Daredevil* may be on a smaller scale to the superhero romps that have come before it – from the big screen to the internet, and from saving the world to Hell's Kitchen – but it's also completely new, and a whole lot darker. We're talking human trafficking, bare-knuckle fighting, child-kidnapping kind of darker. The red Netflix stamp meant that *Daredevil* could be tailored towards a more grown-up audience, so you can expect a suitable level of blood, guts and adult themes.

"I think it suits this character very well," says Charlie Cox, the show's star. "From the comics that I've read, I've found *Daredevil* works best when it's geared towards a slightly older audience. It's not like *Avengers*, where you're trying to save the universe or you're trying to save the world. You're trying to save your street or your city. It's street-level crime you're dealing with. Daredevil walks into a building to confront some Russian human traffickers, and he has to bear in mind the fact that he doesn't have any superpowers. He could easily get knifed or killed or shot, and in order for the stakes to feel that high, we need it to be darker and to feel tonally more adult.

"The way we've been describing it is as a crime drama with superhero elements. Because he doesn't have superpowers, you're able to ground it more in reality, and for me that's very exciting. That's the kind of stuff I would respond to... There's a strong chance, based on how sophisticated the writing is, that you will not have to be any sort of Marvel fan or superhero fan or comic-book fan in any way to enjoy this show."

Though Drew Goddard occupies the 'created by' title card, he had to drop out part way through to work on *Sinister Six*, but he still acts as executive producer and consultant. Replacing him as showrunner was Steven S DeKnight. As someone with a CV that includes shows like *Buffy*, *Angel*, *Smallville* and *Spartacus*, DeKnight's inclusion seems perfect. He also happens to be a life-



Charlie Cox takes to the streets as Matt Murdock, aka Daredevil.



Vincent D'Onofrio as the Kingpin himself, Wilson Fisk.



long *Daredevil* fan, and his enthusiasm for the character is evident. His wish list for the show is probably more or less the same as that of regular fans.

"Half joking, half seriously, I always thought about Stilt Man," he tells us. "Obviously, it's very difficult to do in a grounded reality, but there are so many characters I love. I was thrilled to find out that they are concentrating on Wilson Fisk and to explore that character and his psychology and how he becomes the Kingpin of Crime. That's a story I was dying to tell.

Speaking of Fisk, the pick choice of Vincent D'Onofrio represents the numerous great casting choices on the show. In addition, there's *True Blood*'s



BACK TO BASICS

Other Marvel characters we'd like to see in Netflix's world

The Punisher

Judging by what we've seen so far, Punisher would make the perfect adversary. Adi Shankar's *Dirty Laundry* proved that with the right direction, Thomas Jane can be the quintessential Frank Castle.

Moon Knight

Essentially Bruce Wayne minus the tragic childhood and with added psychological disorders, Marc Spector's life as a costumed crime-fighter seems to take him to far darker places than anything seen before.

Nighthawk

His resemblance to Michael Keaton's Birdman will probably count against him, but as a frequent member of the Defenders in the comics, we wouldn't be surprised to see him show up at some point.

Machine Man

Okay, so he's an intelligent robot whose catchphrase is "My robot brain needs beer". Still, the current Netflix parade doesn't exactly look heavy on comedy, so maybe this could be a much-needed injection.

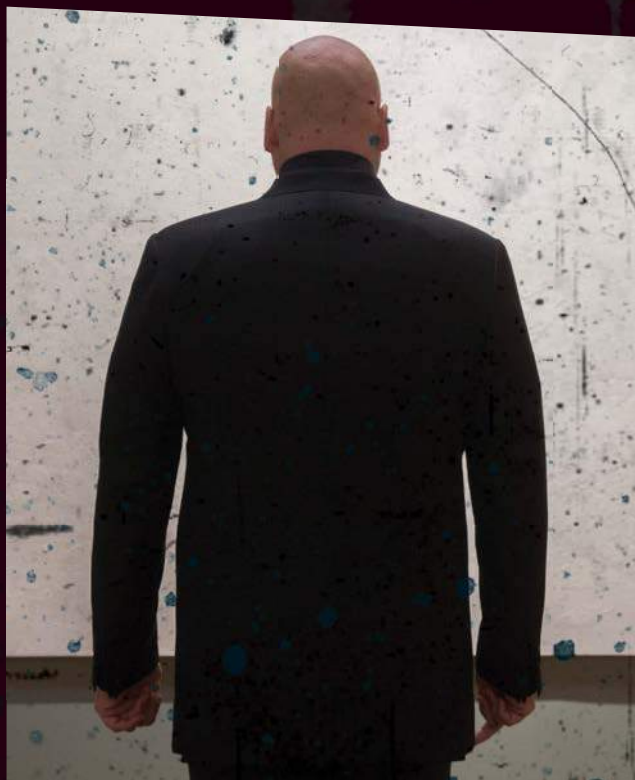
THE FRANK MILLER AND LATER THE BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS RUNS ARE OUR SPIRITUAL GUIDE

STEVEN DEKNIGHT

Deborah Ann Woll as probable love interest Karen Page, *Sin City*'s Rosario Dawson as Claire Temple (Night Nurse in the comics), and *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay*'s Elden Henson as law partner/stooge Foggy Nelson. With Murdock's supporting cast, there's many directions the show could go in.

"Looking forward, there are so many stories to tell. The Hand, Elektra, Bullseye... with a 13-episode arc you don't have to rush it; you can explore. That's not to say we are going to do Bullseye and Elektra, but it's on the radar. I've been a huge fan of the *Punisher* comics for years. I'd love to see him get his due on a platform like this. Nothing would delight me more than to see the Punisher get his own show and maybe we could convince Marvel to go Hard-R rating. If any character deserves an R rating, it's the Punisher.

"We don't take any particular storyline, but we take our inspiration from the entire run of *Daredevil*, specifically some of the Frank Miller and later the Brian Michael Bendis runs, which really are our spiritual guide."



Joe Quesada alighted on casting Cox after watching him in *Boardwalk Empire*.



GETTING THE CASTING FOR MATT MURDOCK RIGHT WAS AT THE TOP OF THE LIST OF PRIORITIES WHEN THE SHOW WENT INTO

development, and DeKnight says the team found what they were looking for in *Stardust* actor Charlie Cox.

"Before the show even came together and Marvel got the rights to *Daredevil* back, Joe Quesada called up Jeph Loeb and said, 'I've found our Matt Murdock,' and that was Charlie Cox, so he was on the radar long before I came in."

Recounting the story, Quesada says, "Long before we had the *Daredevil* rights back from Fox, I was watching *Boardwalk Empire*, and they introduced a new character, Owen Sleater, played by an actor I had never seen before. I was captivated. Here was an actor who went from level-headed liaison for his boss to cold-blooded, psychotic hit man for the IRA, to later romancing the petticoats off a guy's wife within a matter of a few scenes.

"I called Jeph and told him that I had found our Matt Murdock, and his name was Charlie Cox. Jeph laughed and said,

"We saw a lot of great actors, and Charlie came in with a brilliant and somewhat odd audition where he played Matt Murdock as introverted, hunched over and talking to himself," says DeKnight. "It wasn't where we wanted to go, but it was such a strong performance that we talked to Charlie about the character, and told him some more about what we were looking for. Charlie came back in and completely changed his performance, and it was just as brilliant. What I loved about Charlie is that he has a pathos to him. You could see the pain he was portraying just under the surface, but above and beyond all that, he's just a really great guy, which is something you can often overlook when you are casing your lead. All those things combined made him our choice."

Cox had to do quite a lot of preparation to play Murdock. Not being a huge guy to start with, he had to bulk up a fair bit, and admits to never owning a gym membership before filming. But with a role like Murdock, there's more to it on a physical level than showing up on



What we've seen so far draws on the darkest – and best – storylines from the comics.



Matt Murdock alongside law firm partner Foggy Nelson (Elden Henson).

"That's great, but you do know we don't have the rights to *Daredevil*. I was aware of this, but as Jeph knows, no one at Marvel has ever accused me of being pessimistic. In my gut I just knew we were going to get them back.

"Flash forward, the rights eventually revert back, and I'm at dinner with Jeph and Drew. It's early on in the process, and we're playing 'Fantasy Casting,' batting around names both famous and slightly famous, and somewhere in the middle of the conversation I sheepishly say, 'There's this guy named Charlie Cox,' and everyone at the table says 'Who?' 'He was in *Boardwalk Empire*, he strangled a guy in a bathroom with piano wire.' 'Oh yeah, he's awesome! Let's keep him in mind.'"

set with more muscles. As Murdock is blind, Cox had to work at practicing not being able to see.

"That's been really tricky, actually. I worked with a blind consultant who's been blind for 20 years, and most of that was kind of observational, and also kind of technique, blind technique. But when Matt Murdock is walking down the street or when he's with people, he has to maintain this illusion that he's a regular blind man... When he's alone or with people who know about him, he can forget that. He can operate as a regular human being. He would never bump into anything, or he would never need to find a glass with his hands, because he has a 360-degree image of the world he's forming in his mind with his senses.



The 'training costume' is drawn straight from *The Man Without Fear* miniseries.



Probable love interest Karen Page is played by Deborah Ann Woll.

"Having said that, the hardest aspect was the deadness of the eyes. When he takes his glasses off the eyes don't work, and the reason that's tricky is because when Joe, my blind consultant, would talk to me, he would look at my mouth. He wasn't really focusing on anything. He was just looking in my direction. That's easy to replicate, but on camera it doesn't tell the same story. On camera, it looks like two people are talking. So that was quite difficult. I was worried about that, and became quite obsessed with it.

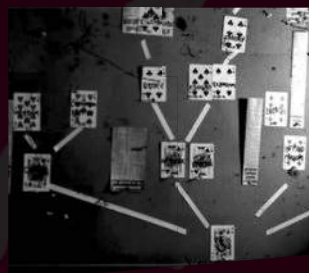
"I watched *Scent Of A Woman* and different films, and there's different ways of advertising it, but I didn't want to advertise it. I just wanted it to be present. So I went back to the panels in the comics, and of course the reason it works is because you know he's blind. So I went, 'You know what? People know. So as long as I didn't look anyone in the eyes and maintained a kind of deadness to them... I could never pick something up and find it with my eyes.' That was the tricky thing. If he picks something up he just knows."

In addition to being a well-known blind superhero in the Marvel universe, Daredevil is also a well-known Catholic.

Luckily for Cox, he didn't have to do as much prep for that aspect, as he was also raised Catholic. He even played a priest in the 2011 film *There Be Dragons*, and went to live with monks for a while, touring Spain and Italy and taking mass a few times.

"My faith goes in and out, I guess. I don't go to church every Sunday or anything like that, but I do identify quite strongly with aspects of my faith and religious upbringing. So that was helpful. There's a scene in the church where Daredevil walks in and sits down, and it was a natural instinct to make the sign of the cross and genuflect before I sat down, because I knew about that. That's one of those things that I luckily just knew. That was one of the few things I got for free on this job!"

When Daredevil isn't being a blind crime-fighting extraordinaire, he's in an office block being a lawyer. Of course, the whole 'dishing out justice' thing often blurs the line between Murdock being a protector of the innocent and Murdock being another trouble-causing thug. The phrase 'justice is blind' plays a big part in the series. Cox thinks Murdock's background in law makes for an interesting narrative.



IT'S A WONDERFUL DEVICE, AND ANOTHER REASON WHY I THINK THE CHARACTER WORKS WELL ON TELEVISION, BECAUSE YOU HAVE

longer to explore these inner conflicts," he tells us. "He's a lawyer by day but he's donning a mask and going out and beating people up at night, so he essentially believes in justice and the law and the whole system, and yet he's not paying respect to it in many ways. Plus, you've got the fact that he's a Catholic and he's grown up in a deeply religious household, so he presumably believes in God and God's will, and he's playing God in some ways... Part of the story of this first season is how he reconciles who he is, what he believes is right and what he believes is just, and how he believes the world should operate, and what his drive is and what his needs are. I think he becomes very torn by those things."

On the question of whether Daredevil is actually a superhero or a criminal with good intentions, Cox is torn himself.

"You have to see him as a superhero, but it depends on what you define a superhero to be," he says. "It's interesting, because the term 'alter ego' is kind of dodgy. I mean, technically Daredevil is Matt Murdock's alter ego. It's almost like initially he just changes costume. He just changes what he's wearing. But something happens to him psychically when he does that. In our show, it's almost like he's a bit of an addict. When he puts the costume on his intentions are good. But it's almost like all bets are off. He can't guarantee what he's going to do. He can't guarantee when he's going to get home.

“YOU HAVE TO SEE HIM AS A SUPERHERO, BUT IT DEPENDS ON WHAT YOU DEFINE A SUPERHERO TO BE”
CHARLIE COX



"Steven DeKnight said that Daredevil is one bad day away from being the Punisher. I thought that was really helpful. Again, it adds to the dark tone, and I think it's more interesting to watch. Personally, I'm not a huge Superman fan. I know he's a huge character and Henry Cavill did a wonderful job [in *Man Of Steel*], but I'm not a huge fan, because Superman is so good. He's so earnest and, for me, it's not always interesting. It's like, 'This is wrong and I'm right, I'm going to do the right thing.' I like these elements where you question it, and he questions it. You know, is he taking this too far?"

After a couple of gut-busting trailers and eye-catching posters, there's still a question on most of our minds: where's the suit? So far, we've only seen Daredevil in a little black number reminiscent of the Man in Black from *The Princess Bride*, but Cox promises the suit is going to make an appearance eventually, and it's going to be good.

"You can't imagine the amount of work and planning that goes into these things. I mean, it is so important and expensive. What was great for the show is that Marvel spent the money on it. They did the same thing for the show that they do for the movie costumes, so they really went there. I saw some designs of the earlier stuff, and what I can tell you is that it's a really great hybrid of the classic, what people want, what they want to see, what they desire and need and what is in people's minds as the Daredevil costume, functionality, and why it is the way it is, certain aspects to it for particular reasons.

"The thing I enjoyed most about the show is that there's a really great storyline that builds up. For me, I really love that. Some people don't. I've spoken to some fans that don't care about that. They want it to be 'it' because it's 'it'. But I really enjoyed the reasoning behind it. Why is there a suit? Why is it the colour it is? Why are these elements attached? What the writers did I thought was brilliant." ☞

Daredevil is available on Blu-ray and DVD and Season Two will air next year.



HERO FOR HIRE

Luke Cage actor Mike Colter on *Daredevil*, AKA *Jessica Jones*, superpowers and more

How does it feel to be the face of Luke Cage?

Marvel is something that I can really anticipate. I've always dreamed about playing a superhero, no particular superhero specifically, but to get something like this is really a gift. So I look at it as an opportunity that I hope continues, and I really love the Luke Cage character and all the scripts that I've been looking at, so I'm excited about it. I'm excited about what it means, and hopefully the fans will like what we're doing and it will carry on for a bit.

What did you think of the scripts?

Obviously I can't go into detail about them, but I could tell you that they are dark and edgy and gritty, and they revolve around characters that live in New York City. I really like what I'm seeing. It's geared towards more of an adult audience, and it's different to the Marvel Cinematic Universe that you see in the big pictures, because this is more refined and focused on [the city]. I feel like people who watch it will be able to enjoy it in a different way than they did with the other stuff in the movies. I look forward to seeing how people take this new creation that Marvel's good at.

How do you feel about the casting of Charlie Cox and Krysten Ritter as *Daredevil* and *Jessica Jones*?

I'm working on *AKA Jessica Jones* with Krysten now, that's where Luke Cage first appears. I haven't worked with Charlie, but it's one of those things where I saw the casting and just... I'm a fan of his from *Boardwalk Empire*. I really liked him in *Boardwalk*, so I thought it was really good casting there, and I've been a big fan of Krysten for a while. I was obsessed with her for the role over a couple of other actresses... There was something very right about her as Jessica Jones. She brings the comic-books to life. I thought she brought something that I couldn't quite put my finger on, but it was something very unique. We went through a gruelling testing with Marvel, so I got to work with her prior to starting the shoot. She's lovely, and I'm really happy for her. I think she's going to nail it and do great things with it.

Are you a fan of the superhero sub-genre?

Yeah! I think most people secretly wish they had some kind of superpower. You couldn't be an all-competent superhero, but you'd have one power, and everyone would love to have that one power. Just one thing you could do, whatever that thing would be: flying, strength, speed, X-ray vision, something. I think everybody has at some point indulged themselves with that thought, especially as a child. Adults grow up because we have to, but I don't think we ever lose that moment of fantasy that makes us feel like we could do something that's otherworldly and something that's special. It's really unique when you get people to create a character that you get to step into and live out, and with the help of special effects and some wonderful camera work, you get to do the things that you only thought you could do in your mind. It's great. It's real fun.

So what would be your power?

I always wanted to be able to transport myself from one place to another. It would be really great, because I would save all the frequent flyer miles and I would have to be on a plane. It would be lovely. The only problem is I wouldn't be able to transport my luggage. I'd have to buy more stuff every time I transport. The clothes don't come with you. You have to start again from scratch. But teleportation would be great.

You'd have to layer up all your clothes before you teleported.

No, I don't think you'd be able to teleport them! You'd have to pop over naked! That's the downside – you'd have to come naked. You'd have to be very specific about where you teleport.

You could get a super-suit that would go with you.

No, I think teleporting naked would be better. It's more fun that way. You'd have to figure out how to get your clothes and find a wallet. It's going to make it much more fun!





BROTHERS

SEESTRAS

SV

WHEN IT COMES TO PLOT TWISTS, ORPHAN BLACK WINS. WE TALK TO ACTOR ARI MILLEN AND CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCER KERRY APPELYARD ABOUT FAMILY, BOY CLONES AND SEASON THREE

ORPHAN BLACK LIKES A GOOD PLOT TWIST. THE ONLY THING THAT COULD HAVE TOPPED HELENA KILLING HER BIRTH MOTHER, KIRA BEING KIDNAPPED AND DYAD BEING secretly run by a sister clone at the end of the Season One was everything that happened in Season Two. But even Dr Leekie's sudden death and Rachel Duncan's eyeball incident were vanilla compared to the big reveal in the season finale. The introduction of four new *boy* clones – all played by Ari Millen – means Season Three could go anywhere.

Millen joined the show for the Season Two opener as Prolethean cult member Mark Rollins. Technically, he was on the side of the religious extremists, but it grew increasingly more difficult to decide whether he was actually a bad guy or not.

"The great thing about *Orphan Black* is that everyone lives in this grey area, and you never know who you can trust," Millen tells us. "There are so many plot twists and turns. Like, you have Mark... He starts off as the right-hand man to the main antagonist, but by the end of the season we like him to a certain extent... and that speaks true

of how Graeme Manson and the rest of the writers create the story. When you look at Helena as well, she's another example of someone that you ultimately fear, but now she's my favourite clone. It's back and forth, which I think is a lot more interesting. My hope is, especially with Castor, that people will go back and forth. They will fear them, but they will also love fearing them... And hopefully we can break their hearts by doing something that they don't want!"

Before Project Caster was introduced, Millen had no idea he would be staying on for Season Three as four different characters. The plan was for him to appear as Mark for five episodes and then be brutally killed off in the sixth. He even jokes that he was introduced to his would-have-been on-screen killer – Dylan Bruce, who plays Sarah's Season One monitor Paul – on his first day on set. But somewhere along the way the show's writers did a U-turn.

"It was something we contemplated in terms of the male clones, but really his strength as a character and where the story took shape and arrived at by the end of Season Two was almost like a kind of consequence of events," says

co-executive producer Kerry Appleyard. "But it was definitely motivated by Ari's performance and how well he had shone in that Prolethean character... He's such a strong actor, and I think he had a difficult job, but he pulled it off with aplomb. The Castor clones are raised by the military, so the differences between them are a lot subtler than the very well-defined differences between the sister clones... He had four to portray, and I think he really holds his own."

Suddenly, Millen found himself making up the whole of the boy equivalent of Maslany's Clone Club, a military-raised fraternity of male clones consisting of Mark, Seth, Rudy and Miller.

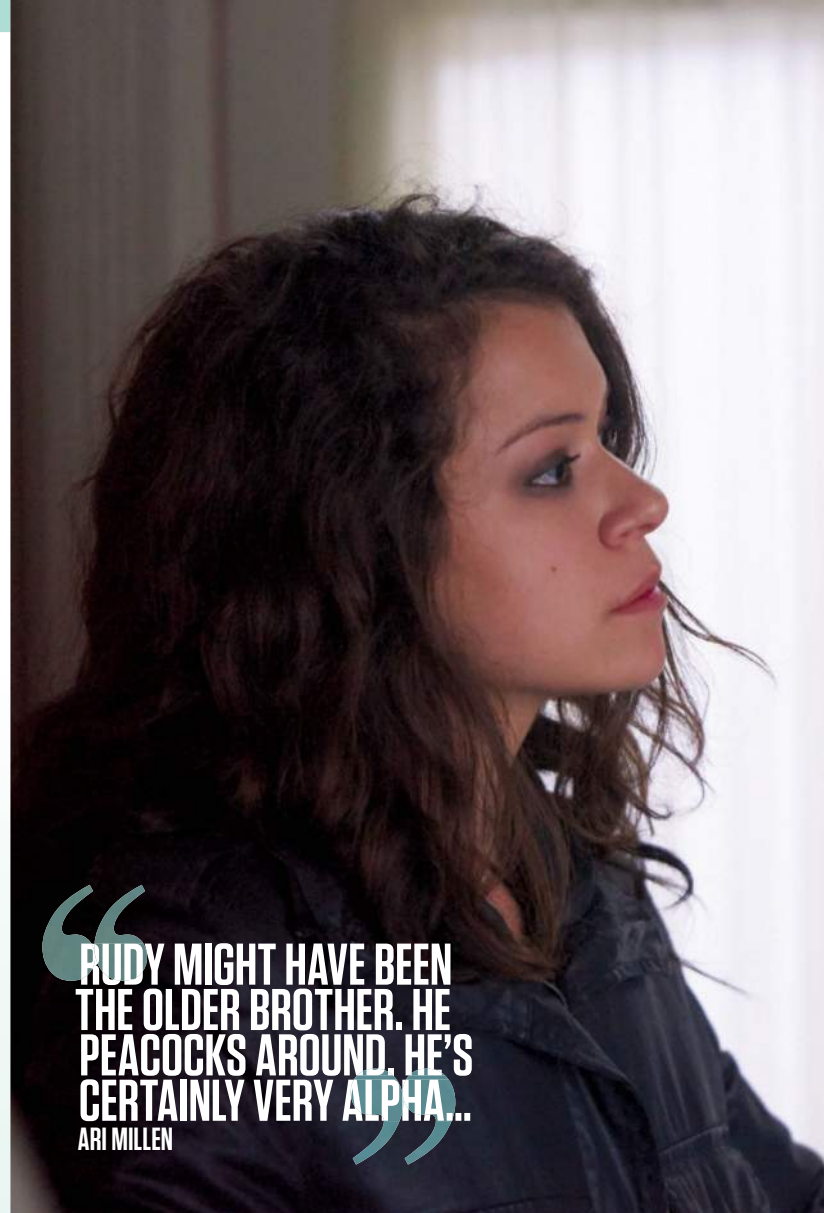
"They grew up together in this sort of little secret pod of brotherhood... [When I was developing these guys], I wanted to make sure that I had the dynamic between them and archetypes. Seth, I always thought, was the runt of the litter, and so he was always constantly seeking approval from his brothers. He might be seen as the most dangerous... because he'll do more than any of the others to get that approval."

"I think **maybe** Rudy might have been the older brother. He peacocks around. He's certainly very Alpha... He loves to exert that prowess over other people and figure out what it is that makes the other person tick, push their buttons and get them off

their game... And then Miller: at one point he decided that climbing the ranks of the military was what we wanted to do, so he is the soldier. He is very much liked by everyone, but he will not take crap from anybody. If you're stepping out of line... he'll put you back in your place.

"Then back to Mark, he's the dark sheep of the brothers. Before I knew he was a clone and a Castor, I always saw him as a lost boy, someone who was always searching for a family that he never had, and then he found it with the Proletheans and the Johanssens, and discovered the path that they wanted to go on with Gracie. That's where he wanted to go. Throughout the second season up to when they elope at the end, he was always taking steps towards a simple life. Now that we're coming to Season Three and the revelation that he is part of Project Castor, his brothers are going to make it very difficult for him to get what he wants... and if he can he would love to leave it all behind."

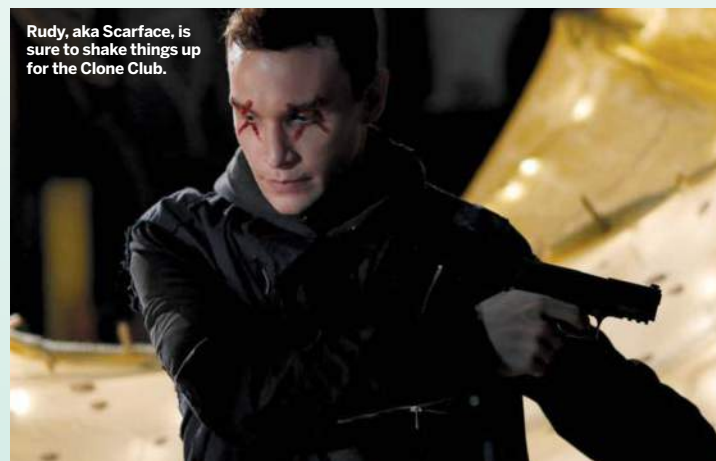
"**Mark and Rudy** are the ones that we really examine more and delve into in terms of their characters, and we take them on a journey throughout the season," says Appleyard. "The show is really about the sisters, the Clone Club, and these are kind of the new enemies of Season Three. We don't get to know them as much as we know our girls, but Mark and Rudy in particular are two characters that will get to



"RUDY MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE OLDER BROTHER. HE PEACOCKS AROUND. HE'S CERTAINLY VERY ALPHA..."
ARI MILLEN



Season Three ended with Helena being handed over to the military by Mrs S.



Rudy, aka Scarface, is sure to shake things up for the Clone Club.

CLONE WARS THE MANY FACES OF TATIANA MASLANY



Sarah Manning
(1.01)

Punk-rock mum with a dark past. Leader and protector of the sisterhood.



Beth Childs
(1.01)

Troubled cop with too much on her plate. Jumps in front of a train in episode one.



Sarah as Beth
(1.01)

Steals Beth's life to escape an abusive ex. Gets caught up in clone drama.



Katja Obinger
(1.01)

A socialite with a briefcase and a bullet in her head, aka 'The German'.



Sarah as Katja
(1.02)

Disguises herself to collect the briefcase and find out what the hell is going on.



Alison Hendrix
(1.02)

Uptight soccer mom with a mean streak. Can be found in rehab and the theatre.



Cosima Niehaus
(1.02)

Science prodigy, PhD student and evo-devo enthusiast. Gets sick and breaks hearts.



Helena
(1.03)

Ukrainian angel of death. Prolethean cult member. Likes jelly and Sarah.

ORPHAN BLACK



Sarah's foster brother Felix (Jordan Gavaris) will hopefully still have her back.

evolve. So just when we thought we knew who our enemies were, suddenly these new clones [are introduced], highly trained male soldiers. The journey with the male clones actually helps the sisters move forward with their own answers in different ways."

Millen and Appleyard both agree that one of the key themes, if not *the* key theme of Season Three, is family: what defines family, the challenges and joys associated with family, and how far you would go to protect your own. Where Sarah, Helena, Cosima and Alison are only just discovering they are family, the Castors have grown up together and built a family unit long ago.

"We have the clone sisterhood going on their shared journey trying to discover who created them and get to the bottom of the introduction of the male clones in their lives, and figure out why they exist and who they are in relation to them," Appleyard tells us. "You'll see the male family and female family give each other answers."

"In Season One and Two, a lot of questions were asked," says Millen. "The world kept expanding, and we didn't know what this was, and I think the great thing about this season is that we're finally going to start getting answers... and of course, with that more questions will be asked. But... we'll be closer to the answer."

"Certainly the first few seasons, the cliffhanger endings were about expanding the plot and creating this whole new aspect. Every year they try to outdo themselves, and obviously create buzz for the next season. Season Three is going to be a huge shock. Actually, there is more than one. There are multiple shockers that happen in the last episode, so it's going to be a fun one!"

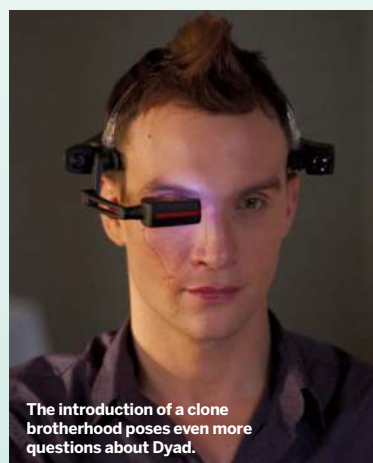
"What's great about the show is that they never just want to sit back and go with what they've done. I think they are always trying to do bigger and more interesting things, and with the introduction of Castor they now have a lot more opportunities. They really are pulling out all the stops."

Does that mean there will be more clone dance party-like scenes to look forward to? "I don't think anyone wants to see me dance!" laughs Millen. "But there certainly are some pretty magical and beautiful things, and technically mind-blowing and frustrating. I wouldn't want to be the post-production guys. I think I heard something about the clone dance party. It took something like 500 man-hours! I'm sure one or two of the scenes will be the equivalent. They really go for it. For my money I think that will probably be the calling card of the show. Whenever you want to show off the show just show that scene. It's pretty incredible." [🔗](#)

Orphan Black is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.



The Dyad Institute just loves to make things difficult for Project Leda.



The introduction of a clone brotherhood poses even more questions about Dyad.



Sarah is more confused than ever, but she continues to kick butts.



Alison as Sarah
(1.04)

Puts on her am-dram skills to visit Kira while her mum is out butt-kicking.



Sarah as Alison
(1.06)

Interrogates Donnie Hendrix, while Alison entertains guests.



Rachel Duncan
(1.10)

Head Clone In Charge. Project founder's daughter. Party pooper.



Helena as Sarah
(1.10)

Disguises herself to murder her and Sarah's mother.



Sarah as Cosima
(2.01)

Uses glasses and fierce eyeliner to infiltrate Dyad.



Jennifer Fitzsimmons
(2.03)

School teacher and swim coach. Defeated by illness.



Sarah as Alison
(2.07)

Attend rehab family day while Alison deals with Vic.



Tony Sawicki
(2.08)

Clone club's only boy. Kisses Felix. Looks oddly like his sister.



Rachel as Sarah
(2.09)

Adopts a punk grunge look to kidnap Kira for science.



PARTNERS IN TIME

WHAT IS MISSY UP TO?
HOW IS OSGOOD STILL
ALIVE? WHO IS MAISIE
WILLIAMS PLAYING?
SO MANY QUESTIONS,
SO LITTLE TIME. WE
TALK TO PETER CAPALDI
AND INGRID OLIVER
ABOUT DOCTOR WHO
SERIES NINE'S
BIGGEST SECRETS
AND MYSTERIES...

SERIES NINE HASN'T STARTED YET, BUT THERE ARE ALREADY MORE QUESTIONS THAN EVER. HOW IS MISSY (MICHELLE GOMEZ) STILL ALIVE AFTER BEING disintegrated in Series Eight finale 'Death In Heaven'? How is Osgood (Ingrid Oliver) still alive after being disintegrated by Missy? Where has Gallifrey been hiding all this time? The trailer released during San Diego Comic Con has also helped to fuel the mystery fire, particularly Maisie Williams' perplexing cameo right at the end. It was only eight seconds long, but it's been driving the *Doctor Who* fans mad. From his reaction to her cheeky little 'What took you so long, old man?' (*You!*), the Doctor (Peter Capaldi) has definitely met her before. We've met her now, but it's still equally perplexing just how much Maisie Williams will have to do with the rest of the show. The most recent rumours peg her as the latest companion, ready to take Jenna Coleman's place.

More troubling still is when we visit the set and turn up at an apparently abandoned military base outside Newport. It's huge and in the middle of nowhere, and there are literally monsters lurking in the shadows, namely Zygons. We're here to watch one attack Osgood, who appears to be back from the dead. But she seems as surprised as we are. Could it be that she will replace Clara instead?

"I'd read an interview with Steven [Moffat] where he said, 'No, no, no, Osgood is dead. She's not coming back,'" Oliver tells us. "I secretly hoped that I might [come back], but then he said that and I was like, 'Damn it!' There was a good while there were I was like, 'That's a shame! That was lovely while it lasted! So that's over,' but yes. Now I'm back! Or am I? No, I am! I am actually technically back."

"When I found out I was doing it again last series, I was like, 'Yes!' I got the script, and I was on the way to the gym. I was reading it on the way, and then by about page ten I was dead. I was like, 'Oh god!' I was genuinely gutted. You just don't know. I think it's always best to hope for the worst, and then if it's something else it's a nice, pleasant surprise, so I didn't allow myself to think that I might be coming back. I wanted to, of course. But no one warned me! And then at the read-through for ['Death In Heaven'], I was looking at Steven, trying to work out if there was any, like, 'Don't you worry, you'll be fine!' And I was like, 'Hi, Steven!' and he said, 'Sorry we killed you!' and laughed. And then I was like, 'Damn. Okay. Fine.' There's my answer. But yeah... it was a surprise to me as much as anyone else."

Current Doctor Peter Capaldi is also thrilled that Osgood is reuniting with the gang this series. "I think she is brilliant!" he says. "Ingrid is amazing, and she's a wonderful character. So audacious. What a brilliant idea to create a *Doctor Who* fangirl with her inhaler and all that."



This is looking like it could be the darkest series of new *Who* yet.



The identity of Maisie Williams' character remains elusive.

And she's brilliant, she's so clever, funny and great. I think you'll see there are a lot of people who could come into the TARDIS quite easily. We're kind of playing around with orphans."

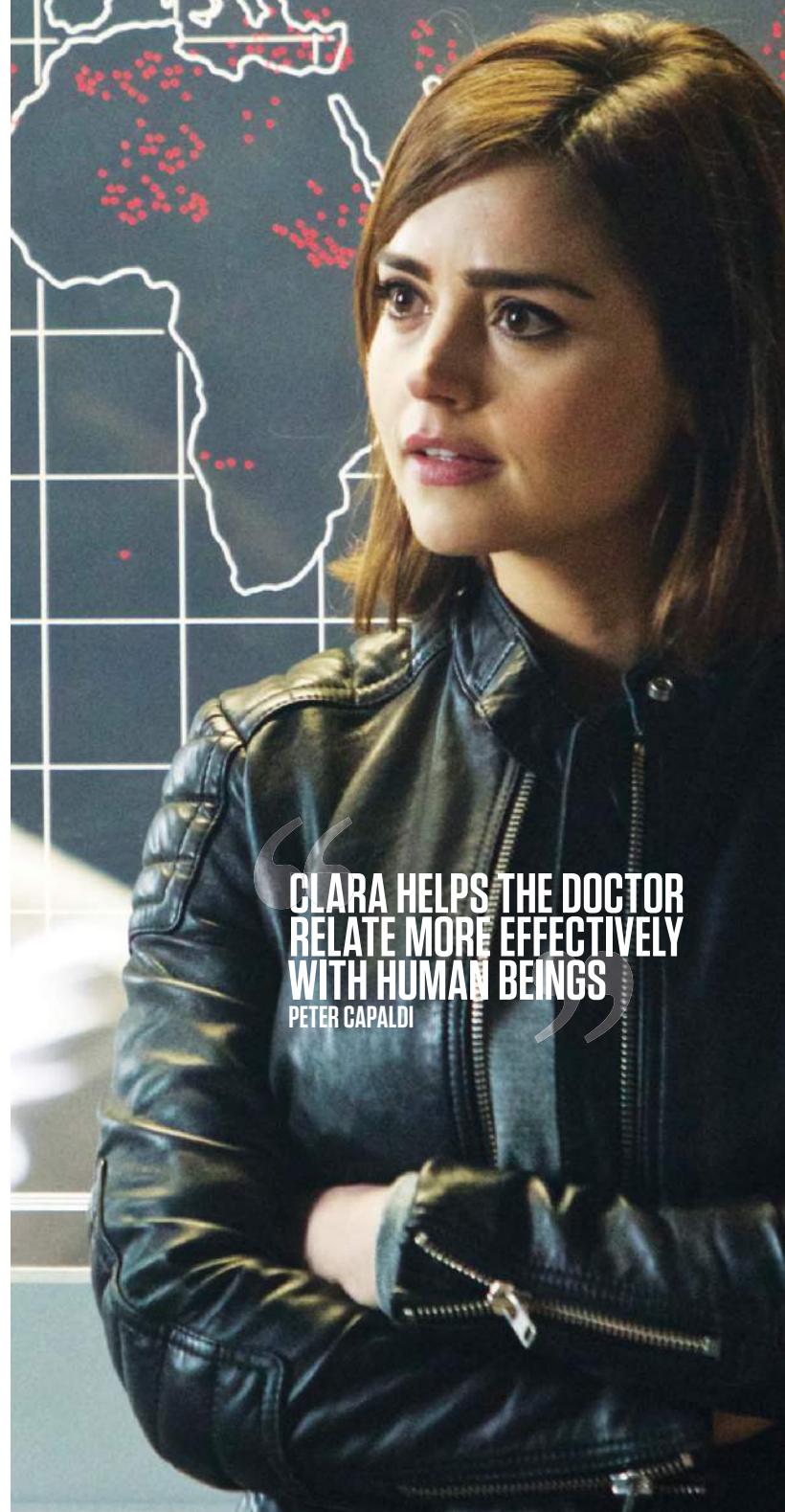
When asked if Osgood could end up being the Doctor's next travelling partner, Oliver refuses to answer the hypothetical question "out of respect for the incumbent companion," while Capaldi gives a cryptic smile and a short, "She could well be." We leave it hanging. In the meantime, Osgood is on board for a two-parter called 'Invasion Of The Zygons'.

"I've often wanted an invasion!" Capaldi laughs. "It's time we had invasion – a proper big, old one! There's a great scene where we have to chase a Zygon around a supermarket. He hid among the pizzas. That was good fun... I had a little part in a film [many years ago] called *Dangerous Liaisons*, which was set in the 18th Century, and there were beautiful costumes. They looked elegant. But the costume designer was James Atcheson, who had created the Zygons, because he worked on *Doctor Who* before he went on to great success

and acclaim in movies, and all I wanted to do was talk to him about Zygons! He didn't really want to do that! But I was fascinated, because he'd made Tom Baker's scarf and all that stuff. I mean, he created those things out of his head and with the limited resources that they had available to them. I think it's a great testament to his talent."

'Invasion Of The Zygons' will be Oliver's second face-off with the creatures after we were left with a replica Zygon-Osgood in 'The Day Of The Doctor'. But Oliver has more important things to get excited about. "I get to spend a lot of time with the Doctor, which is nice," she tells us. "It's funny, because it's that thing of having watched a lot of *Who* and sort of knowing... I can't describe it. When you're filming and he's standing there, you're automatically slotted in behind standing slightly to the right, because that's the classic thing!" A huge Series Eight poster featuring the Doctor in front of the TARDIS control panel with Clara peeping out from the right sits directly behind Oliver as she says it, and makes the whole thing even more hilarious.

Kate Lethbridge-Stewart is back by the Doctor's side.



CLARA HELPS THE DOCTOR RELATE MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH HUMAN BEINGS
PETER CAPALDI

Bowties are cool

We examine the Doctor's timeless style

With every regeneration comes a whole new look, and all of those looks have been truly special. The Doctor has rocked everything from scarfs, cravats and floppy hats to sticks of celery and leather jackets. Here are the Time Lord's most iconic looks...

THE EXPLORER



The First Doctor (William Hartnell)
A dress shirt, ribbon tie, blazer and tweed slacks with a Karakul hat for when it's a bit nippy out.

THE HARD DAY'S NIGHT



The Second Doctor (Patrick Troughton)
A sensible jacket and tiny bowtie with high-waisted tartan trousers add a dash of eccentricity.

COUNT LIBERACE



The Third Doctor (Jon Pertwee)
A smoking jacket with a ruffled shirt, bowtie and cape. Lots of velvet! Lots of detail! Lots of flair!

SCARF FACE



The Fourth Doctor (Tom Baker)
A classic Paddington Bear look, but with more colours, more textures and a scarf to end all scarves.

THE JIMINY CRICKET



The Fifth Doctor (Peter Davison)
Cricket whites with a matching Panama hat and a trademark stick of celery in the jacket's buttonhole.

TIME'S HARLEQUIN



The Sixth Doctor (Colin Baker)
So many colours, patterns and layers, finished off with a waistcoat, spotted cravat and cat broche.



Could this be the last series for Jenna Coleman's Clara Oswald?

"Exactly that, funnily enough!" she says, gesturing madly. "Scenes with him I'm slotted behind, slightly to the right! You just sort of know that's the natural order of things... He's like, 'Get out of my light.' No, no, no! You just do it. You don't even question it. It's sort of funny. You just stand, or he runs and you run behind. I did a really weird comedy run, and I'm not sure if they left it in. I decided when Osgood ran she wouldn't be that good at running. It was a slight waddle, but I don't know that was the right choice. They'll take it out!"

Jenna Coleman is also back in the TARDIS as Clara Oswald for Series Nine, which is a nice surprise after months of rumours that she would be exiting the show after 'Last Christmas'. "What [Clara] does a lot this series is she helps the Doctor relate more effectively with human beings," says Capaldi, "because he doesn't... he can't be arsed to give them the time of day if they're not doing what he wants [laughs], so she has little strategies to help him be better, which is quite fun."

"[Jenna] is great. We have a wonderful time, she and I in a very similar way. We have a good laugh, but then of course, she terrifies me, because we have a good laugh and then she's brilliant! Whereas I have a good laugh and then I'm a bit tatty. I think she's such a good actress, but she is able to be hugely emotional and hugely truthful, clever and creative without a whole palaver going on. We don't have a lot of palaver. We don't have time for palaver! But I just think she's brilliant. She has great charm, elegance and fun. And I love that she's from Blackpool, which is one of my favourite places. The Doctor should go to Blackpool!"

Along with Clara and Osgood, the Mistress, played by the brilliant Michelle Gomez, is coming back for more after she too appeared to die in Series Eight's very eventful finale. Her performance left an impression on both Capaldi and Oliver. "She's brilliant," says the former. "Very, very funny, and scary

Do Not Pass

Oliver on Who memorabilia

Having your own action figure seems to be a rite of passage for *Doctor Who* companions. 360-degree photo scans of Ingrid Oliver have existed since day one, but she's yet to be immortalised in plastic. "I know that I've got a *Top Trumps* card, which was one of my career-defining highlights," she says. "Literally the values are so poor it's laughable. Brains is quite high, and I think my brains were higher than some of the Doctors, but I think terror value was zero! It was really poor! So I was like the Old Kent Road of the *Top Trumps* world. I think there might also be a 50th Anniversary *Monopoly* set. My brother said he saw one in Waterstones, and I think I might be on that. I might actually be the Old Kent Road."

too. Though our relationship is very different in that story compared to how it was before. We're sort of on the same side."

"God! I was terrified of her!" Oliver says, and rightly so; Osgood was one of those on the receiving end of Missy's wrath, and left the episode in a chokehold before being turned to dust. "She's so good, but even at the read-through, we were all like, 'Bloody hell!' I was absolutely, genuinely terrified... It's the eyes. She's got these incredible eyes. That was a really scary scene to shoot!"

"[Season Nine] is good, because we get cliffhangers," Capaldi tells us. "It's always lovely to get *Doctor Who* cliffhangers followed by the screeching sound of the soundtrack. So it's brilliant. It sort of gives you a bit more time. There seems to be more places to go and more character development stuff. It allows the writers a bit more time with the characters and story, and it's just great to be like, 'Is the Doctor dead? Can he be dead? Is Clara dead?' And at the end of each episode be like, 'Guess what!'"

If you know anything about Capaldi's history with *Doctor Who*, you'll know that A) He played Roman merchant Caecilius in

It's yet another day at the office for the Capaldi-and-Coleman double act.



THE RIDDLER



The Seventh Doctor (Sylvester McCoy)
Question marks are everywhere, from the handle of the umbrella to the knitted tank top.

THE ARISTOCRAT



The Eighth Doctor (Paul McGann)
A 19th Century silk waistcoat, frock coat and cravat with a pocket watch as a final touch.

THE LEATHER RAMBLER



The War Doctor (John Hurt)
A neckerchief and lots of leather: leather jacket, leather gaiters, leather boots. Lots of brown too.

THE DANNY ZUKO



The Ninth Doctor (Christopher Eccleston)
A leather jacket, a dark t-shirt and jeans worn with a devil-may-care attitude.

THE SUPPLY TEACHER



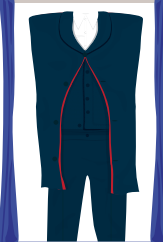
The Tenth Doctor (David Tennant)
Trench coat. Converse. Shirt, tie, pinstriped suit. Sometimes red and blue 3D glasses. Easy.

THE TRAILBLAZER



The Eleventh Doctor (Matt Smith)
A tweed jacket, colourful bowtie, braces and grandad trousers, and occasionally a fez.

THE COOL UNCLE



The Twelfth Doctor (Peter Capaldi)
A dark and mysterious waistcoat/trouser/boots combo with a pop of colour in the jacket lining.



**I GOT SENT THIS
PICTURE OF SORT OF 20
OSGOODS, AND IT WAS
ABSOLUTELY BIZARRE**
INGRID OLIVER

Series Four episode "The Fires Of Pompeii", and B) He's a *Doctor Who* fanboy himself. But he still insists he could easily get beaten in a knowledge-off by some of the crew.

"It would surprise you! The knowledge is immense! Joking aside, it is great that there are so many people who are fans of the show and who love the show who make it. I mean, to be honest, that's why, and I think it's always been the way since it's come back. It's sort of why it's been so successful. Despite the fact that it's been very successful as a worldwide brand, it's essentially made by people who love it, and also that means that they will go the extra mile. Maybe if you were working on something that you were less connected to, you might not put in the extra time and the extra effort to try and make it look better, sound better or whatever. But yeah, there are a lot of big fans on the show."

He kind of expected that when he signed up, but what he really wasn't prepared for was the depth of affection of which the show is held internationally. "That really came as a shock," he says. "To go to America and find that the show is beloved is very strange, because you'd never have thought that they'd had it in Mexico since 1963 and that it means something very powerful to people,

The Hair Of The Doctor Capaldi on the Doc's locks

You may have noticed that the Twelfth Doctor's look changes over time. Shirts, hoodies, waistcoats – he likes to mix it up a bit. But the biggest change can be seen in his hair, which is becoming less and less tame. "I always wanted it to be longer, but everyone felt it was important to make a very decisive change," said Capaldi. "It always happens in the first season of a new Doctor. They make a very decisive change and contrast to the one before, and Matt being so friendly and affectionate and open, I think they wanted me to be quite different to that. But my hair, it just grows. I'm just lucky it's still there! It's the bane of everyone's life. It drives everybody crazy. Some people think I'm going for the full Jon Pertwee bouffant!"

Whatever happens, the Doctor can count on Clara to save the day.





Series Nine is going down the spooky route with some dark two-parters.

Who is Williams playing? The mystery has been driving the internet mad.



Enemies Of Time

Chronicling the number of appearances made by some of Doctor Who's most memorable villains



or in South Korea or wherever you want to go, Australia. I knew that it was doing well, but I didn't know that there was such a love for it! It's powerful."

Some people involved in a phenomenon like *Doctor Who* might view being constantly recognised as a burden, but for Capaldi it's the opposite. "All I've got to do is walk into a room of people who like *Doctor Who*, and they sort of stop and smile. If I wasn't the Doctor that wouldn't happen! It's very easy to surf this tide of affection. I've been very lucky; people don't beat me up or tell me they hate me. They keep that to themselves! But that's a very privileged position for anyone to be in. I often have a sense of wonder that I'm even in that position! It's wonderful! Can you imagine, people smile when they see you all the time and they shout at you across the street, 'Doctor Who! Doctor Who!' and they wave at you. A little kid came up to me and threw herself at me, threw her arms around my shoulders. They want so little from you! They just want you to be Doctor Who."

However, he's not confident that the *Who* world will last for him like it has done for some, who repeatedly come back for anniversary episodes and Big Finish audios. "Future-former Doctor Who, Peter Capaldi!"

Michelle Gomez's Missy is back, but what does she have planned?



As ever, *Doctor Who* is keeping its biggest secrets close to its chest.



“MISSY’S BRILLIANT...
VERY, VERY FUNNY, AND
SCARY TOO”
INGRID OLIVER

Expect havoc from some mysterious new monsters and aliens.



Clara is getting into some tight spots. Nothing out of the ordinary.

he cackles. "There's a whole world out there. [The *Thick Of It* creator] Armando Iannucci said to me, 'That's your future: the *Galaxy Quest* life.' So I'm very lucky to have that available to him, but we'll cross that bridge when we come to it, which may be sooner rather than later."

Capaldi has been riding the tide of affection for a while, but for Oliver it's still relatively new. She has been Osgood longer than he has been the Doctor, but since she's only appeared in two episodes so far, Oliver is delighted by the fan reaction to her character.

"I got sent an extraordinary picture from [US *Doctor Who* convention] Gallifrey One, because I was supposed to go, but I couldn't, and I got sent this picture of sort of 20 Osgoods, and it was absolutely bizarre. One of them was a 60-year-old man cosplaying Osgood, and I thought that was brilliant. Clearly mass appeal. 60-year-old men who want to be a girl scientist. It's a good outfit. I think if I was cosplaying I'd go for that."

Having joined for both 'The Day Of The Doctor' and 'Death In Heaven', Oliver is

probably one of a very few people who have starred with four different Doctors. "It was genuinely one of the most exciting things," she says. "I don't know that that's going to be topped... The 50th Anniversary was insane, and I was very aware of how lucky I was while I was doing it. There was one point where the three Doctors burst out of a painting, and I think I said this at the time actually, at the 50th, so it was John Hurt, David Tennant and Matt Smith, and they sort of do that macho stride to the camera. There was a wind machine, and I just started almost laughing. I was like, 'Oh my god, this is the most ridiculous thing I have ever seen in my life,' and I almost didn't know what to do with that visual information, and so I completely ruined the take."

"And then Peter is insanely brilliant, absolutely, genuinely. I've learnt a lot. I watch him from the shadows, I lurk. He's amazing. That was so gushing! I talk to him and I'm like, 'Ahhhhh!' All in character." ✍

Doctor Who Series Nine is currently airing on BBC One.

Time Traveller's Life

Here's our definitive guide to the highest joys and lowest woes of being a Doctor Who Companion...



Rose Tyler (Billie Piper)

Dates as companion: 2005-10

Aliases: Bad Wolf

Occupation: Shop assistant

First and last full episode as companion: 'Rose', 'Doomsday'
Greatest highs: Saves London with gymnastics; prevents her father's death; stands up to Sycorax; becomes Bad Wolf; saves Earth

Worst lows: Gets stuck in another dimension



Martha Jones (Freema Agyeman)

Dates as companion: 2007-10

Aliases: The Girl Who Walked The Earth

Occupation: Physician

First and last full episode as companion: 'Smith And Jones', 'Last Of The Time Lords'

Greatest highs: Gets hit on by Shakespeare; defeats the Master

Worst lows: Almost all of 'Family Of Blood'; travels the world on foot



Donna Noble (Catherine Tate)

Dates as companion: 2008-10

Aliases: The DoctorDonna

Occupation: Temp

First and last full episode as companion: 'Partners In Crime', 'Journey's End'

Greatest highs: Saves the Adipose; stops the Shadow Proclamation; saves a family in Pompeii; DoctorDonna

Worst lows: The whole of 'Turn Left'; has her memory wiped



Amy Pond (Karen Gillan)

Dates as companion: 2010-12

Aliases: The Girl Who Waited

Occupation: Kissogram, model, journalist

First and last full episode as companion: 'The Eleventh Hour', 'The Angels Take Manhattan'

Greatest highs: Makes the Doctor fish fingers and custard; sacrifices herself for Rory to try and create a paradox

Worst lows: Gets sent back in time



Rory Williams (Arthur Darvill)

Dates as companion: 2010-12

Aliases: The Last Centurion

Occupation: Nurse

First and last full episode as companion: 'The Impossible Astronaut', 'The Angels Take Manhattan'

Greatest highs: Protects Amy in the Pandorica for 2000 years; punches Hitler in the face

Worst lows: Gets killed. A lot



Clara Oswald (Jenna Coleman)

Dates as companion: 2013-present

Aliases: The Impossible Girl

Occupation: Teacher

First full episode as companion: 'The Bells Of St John'

Greatest highs: Enters the timestream to save the Doctor's life; gives three Doctors a pep talk

Worst lows: Being turned into a Dalek; numerous failed soufflé attempts; gets trapped in the internet; Danny's death

VILLAINS
WILL
RISE

ARE WE
HAVING FUN
YET?

GOTHAM
WILL FALL

GOTHAM'S RECKONING

HAVING INTRODUCED THE PENGUIN, RIDDLER, CATWOMAN AND MORE, SEASON TWO WILL SEE GOTHAM'S ROGUE'S GALLERY CONTINUE THEIR RISE TO INFAMY. THE CAST AND CREW OF THE BATMAN SPINOFF TALK TO US ABOUT UPPING THEIR GAME, THE JOKER AND FINDING A WINNING FORMULA...

LET'S PUT
A SMILE ON
YOUR FACE

IT'S SIMPLE
KILL GORDON

GOTHAM HAD THE MEDIA SPOTLIGHT ON IT FROM ALMOST THE MOMENT IT WAS ANNOUNCED. IT HAD TOP-RATED ACTORS, AN AUDIENCE WILLING TO WATCH AND a must-see premise, chronicling the pre-Batman days of Gotham City. What it didn't have, in many instances, was a consistency of vision, with great noir elements frequently undermined by jarringly scenery-chewing villains. In Season Two, however, the mix is going to be somewhat different.

"I think with a lot of first-year shows, you spend a lot of time finding out exactly what it is," says executive producer John Stephens. "Is it procedural? Is it more police work? Are we going to push the boundaries of the supervillains' world and have people take drugs and get really strong? Okay, that's terrible, we're not going to do that anymore. Are we going to have a serial killer? No, that doesn't feel right. We kind of shifted around until we started finding what we were happy with. Hopefully when we do these shows, you're on the air long enough to find what that tone is, and I feel in Season Two we've really locked it in."

Executive producer and series creator Bruno Heller has done his own assessment of year one and how it has impacted on the approach to this year. "The world is so vast," he says. "There are so many storylines, characters and situations you can portray, that you can overstretch yourself. If I was going to criticise myself for that first season, it's a comic-book thing. You can stuff more into a comic-book world than you can a classical drama, but this season we're content with much more coherent arcs that go straight through the year. It's also partly the luxury of having a full order and knowing how many episodes there are going to be. We started out with the notion that there would be a procedural element. We think that the world is too large to allow for that formal structure. Every episode is going to be different. Every episode is going to be a little movie. Every episode is going to have its own energy and pop."

"There is a subtitle on the show," Heller continues, "which is 'The Rise Of The Villains'. It's very much about the transition from old-school, mafia-type villainy to the grandiose, grotesque, Gothic theme that *Gotham* is slowly moving towards. The crimes are grander and the villains more theatrical. Monsters start to come out a bit."

It's Stephens' feeling that the over-the-top elements in Season One weren't executed as well as they could have been. "There is definitely an

"IN SEASON TWO, BRUCE IS GOING TO START TO BE BATMAN. THAT'S A FACT"

DAVID MAZOUZ

Bruce's journey towards his Dark Knight destiny will continue in Season Two.



evolutionary shift that's happening this year," he offers. "Where Season One was kind of a Falcone/Maroni mob version of *Gotham*, for Season Two we started taking a step towards the creation of supervillains. We do want to move towards that world. It's like boiling a frog – you want to do it slowly. By the time you arrive at those characters and if you want to do Killer Croc or whatever, you want to do a realistic version. You want to do something that helps create a world where that character could live. I think that will be exciting."

Like everybody else in Hollywood, the producers of *Gotham* are keeping a tight lid on specifics of the new year, though they do, in brief, mention a couple of the villains they're developing.

"We thought long and hard about this," Heller explains. "So many of the characters don't have origin stories. It's not just a question of enjoying going back to an origin story; it's who fits in a realistic world. Some characters you'll advance stylistically, but we found, for instance, the Mr Freeze story very emotional. That's one we're going to look at."

Stephens agrees. "With Mr Freeze, you want to see someone who's, above anything, empathetic. He does have an emotional story at heart. That's part of his origin story, and you want someone that you feel for, first and foremost. We will also see the beginning of The Joker, or a Joker story – I'll put it that way. We have a very specific take on how we want that story to play out. And it does play out in the first three episodes of the show."

"If that is indeed the Joker, he's in Arkham," adds Heller. "When Barbara Keen is put in the wing of Arkham – where the worst of the worst are kept – an event happens which allows him to be involved in the next few episodes. He gets to fulfil his destiny."

Of course, not all the villains will be new faces. Cory Michael Smith's Edward Nygma is one of them, gradually shifting towards his destiny of becoming the Riddler. For the actor, that transformation is somewhat understandable given the fact that the character is, in his own words, "a complete loser" that nothing goes right for.

"Being so tightly wound, being so frustrated and having blood on his hands... at the end of Season One, he just explodes," says Smith. "He has to change. He has to try something different. The beginning of Season Two will be him having to confront this voice, very literally this other person who is saying, 'Dude, take control. Do something. Make a choice.' He has to adjust to that and make changes. He has to find a new identity, so that's where we're at. We're not dealing with a villain yet. It's not someone having mal-intentions yet. He just wants to be happy. He wants people to like him. He wants love and respect. We're still with good intentions, but he's got to gain some power. And things are looking up if he listens to this alter-ego of his."

Power, of course, is not a problem for Robin Lord Taylor's Oswald Cobblepot, who rose to the top of the power food chain in Gotham by the end of Season One. "We start Season Two, and he's the king of the Gotham underworld," enthuses Taylor. "Falcone's out of the picture. Fish is swimming. He set out to accomplish this, and he did. But he's as smart as anyone else. He knows that once you get to the top of Gotham City, there's someone who's going to take you down. He knows he has to be even more vigilant than he was in the first season to just hang on to his power. I will say the biggest adversary coming up is a new character that we've introduced, Theo Galavan (James Frain). It's really not just Oswald. Galavan is going to be a challenge for every principal character in the show, because he just comes in and shakes up that whole power structure. You're going to see that. He's going to manoeuvre his way around there."

Power becomes a driving force of Ben McKenzie's James Gordon, who according to Stephens, is walking the line between good and evil, exploring just how dark you can go without losing

yourself. "Some people," he proposes, "will go into the darkness and not come back. Jim Gordon will step over that line again. In his quest to try to save Gotham and restore it, he's going to try to acquire power, because the city is so corrupt. His feeling is, 'Only if I'm the most powerful person in Gotham can I save the city I love.' And it's a classic noir trope in that the more you look into darkness, the darkness looks into you. That starts to change him, and he has to sort of pull himself out. He's really going to be put through the ringer."

For his part, McKenzie notes, "We pick up Season Two where it's sort of a reversal of fortune. Cobblepot is the king of Gotham, and Gordon is at the lowest he's ever been. Because of the events of last season, he's a traffic cop and he's pretty bitter about it. As always in *Gotham*, though, things change quickly and the roles reverse yet again. Season One was the origin of Gotham as a city that was ruled by crime families. Now that we've sort of destroyed that, Season Two starts to explore the rise of the villains."

A central component to Gordon is his relationship with Bruce Wayne (David Mazouz), which is difficult at best. "They were on the outs in the middle of the first season, as Bruce felt betrayed by Jim for not living up to his promise to solve his parents' murder," McKenzie says. "They're slowly picking up the pieces. Bruce is not being completely honest with Jim, because as he discovers this 'secret office' his father had, he embarks on his own journey, and doesn't tell Jim."

Season Two will also explain how Lucius Fox (Chris Chalk) and Bruce Wayne got to be so tight. "How did Lucius come into his life?" asks Heller "What was his role in Wayne Enterprise and his relationship with Bruce and his father? He's instrumental in unlocking some of the secrets that Bruce will discover in what will later become known as the Batcave, which is now just his father's secret office."

WE'RE NOT DEALING WITH A VILLAIN YET. EDWARD JUST WANTS TO BE HAPPY. HE WANTS PEOPLE TO LIKE HIM

CORY MICHAEL SMITH

Despite his breakdown at the end of Season One, Edward Nygma (Cory Michael Smith) hasn't quite turned yet.

Jerome (Cameron Monaghan) is set for a bigger role this season.

THE CHANGING FACE OF THE BATCAVE

How Wayne Manor's basement has reflected the times...



BATMAN (1966)



Clean, tidy, light, and lots of fun flashing lights on clearly labelled machines. No one's getting lost or doing too much soul-searching down here.



BATMAN (1989)



It's a cave. There are banks of monitors for doing useful things. This is as Tim Burton as it gets, complete with Lonely Michael Keaton eating soup.



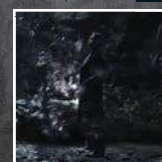
BATMAN FOREVER (1995)



The Batcave got less terrifying and more toy friendly. It's still big and overblown, but there are fewer logistical (and real) nightmares.



BATMAN BEGINS (2005)



Nolan strips it back and makes the cave a cave. And not a Tim Burton cave either, like a real cave you would get in real life, because it's real.



The journey of Bruce Wayne is evolving him psychologically into the Batman persona. "The theme of Batman is the idea of the duality of personality," Stephens details. "You can do one thing or you can be another thing, and you watch all these characters make that kind of shift. In Season One, Bruce was so forthright; always so honest. You're going to start to see him make a fissure in his personality. Like, 'If I'm going to succeed in what I'm doing, I have to learn to put a different face out in the public and become a different person. It will be the creation of the Bruce Wayne persona.'"

Mazouz, who has seen his role become much more extensive than originally planned on the strength of his performance, feels that the character's changes will be much more prominent in Season Two. "I don't think in Season One the psychological change was really happening," he admits. "In Season One he was just kind of breathing. He had an obsession

start to form. He was hell-bent and very focused on his parents' murder and getting revenge, in a sense, but he wasn't really Batman yet. He was just a kid who wanted to know what happened to his parents.

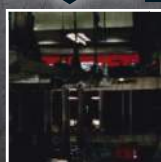
"In Season Two," reveals Mazouz, "he's going to start to be Batman. That's a fact. He's going to have whatever is down that stairwell. He's going to have that. He's going to have Lucius Fox and Alfred. It's going to be the three of them working together to evolve him. When Batman is Batman, there is his Batman side and then his public persona, his Bruce Wayne side, which is a playboy kind of guy. In Season Two he's going to start to evolve that second persona... He's going to make the public think that Bruce Wayne is a loser. He's a playboy and a party boy, and he doesn't actually care about anything. Alfred, Lucius and Bruce are really going to, as Sean Pertwee likes to say, become 'Operation Good Guys'."

"There are so many villains teaming up," he closes. "There are mobs of villains. There are guys who are constantly teaming up, and others who are killing each other. Many of them are a team. In Season Two, you're going to feel that same sense of teamwork in Operation Good Guys!"

Gotham: Season Two is currently airing on Fox in the US, with a UK air date to follow.



BATMAN V SUPERMAN (2016)



Snyder's Batcave looks gloomy but functional. There's lots of glass, running water and room for reflecting on the people you failed to save.

GOTHAM PD PAROLE REVIEW

Oswald Cobblepot

Status: Free

While we will have to keep an eye on Oswald, he has proven to be a useful source of information, although he's prone to acts of violence and he's definitely manipulating Gotham's mob scene. This might be a case where we should leave him out there and just pray to god that he doesn't kill anyone else.



GOTHAM PD PAROLE REVIEW

Jerome

Status: Imprisoned

Frankly, the more we find out about Jerome, the more sinister he becomes. We will obviously attempt to find a form of therapy that works for this homicidal young lunatic, but frankly we're probably going to have our hands full keeping him locked up.

Have you seen his grin? Terrifying.



GOTHAM PD PAROLE REVIEW

Carmine Falcone

Status: Free

Gotham's premier crime lord told Detective Jim Gordon that he'd retired from his life of crime. There was even a rather touching gift of a pocketknife, or so I'm told.

Historically, Don Falcone has been a man of his word, but he is a mob lord after all, so we'd best keep an eye on him.



GOTHAM PD PAROLE REVIEW

Fish Mooney

Status: Dead

Fish truly was a case of swings and roundabouts. She gave us dynamite intel when we needed it, but it turns out that she was a lot more deadly and a lot more heavily involved in the worst of Gotham's organised crime than we knew. Word of her death is something that won't keep us up at night, quite frankly.





SCIFINOW GOES ON SET FOR PENNY DREADFUL'S SECOND SEASON TO TALK WITCHES, BRIDES OF FRANKENSTEIN, WOLFMEN, AND WHY OUR GOTHIC HEROES ARE IN FOR MUCH, MUCH MORE ELEGANT SUFFERING...

WE'RE STANDING IN THE LABORATORY OF DR VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN. JARS OF FLUORESCENT CHEMICALS LINE THE WORK SURFACES, HUNDREDS of feet of wires crisscross above us, and anatomical drawings cover the walls. A can of Lilt hidden on the desk is a tip-off that we're not in a real Victorian physician's workspace, rather the stages of Ardmore Studios, where *Penny Dreadful* Season

Two is wrapping up, but the level of detail is staggering. As we're taken around the home of Sir Malcolm Murray, into the freezing, austere bedroom of Vanessa Ives and through the incredible costume, make-up effects and prop departments, the world of *Penny Dreadful* is so convincing that it's not too surprising when supervising producer Chris King tells us that some of its stars are having nightmares.

"I haven't, actually," laughs Billie Piper, who's returning as Brona Croft – in a way – for the show's second season. "I sleep like I'm dead, so it's not been a problem for me. But I can imagine in places it would start to wander through people's subconscious – it's kind of unrelenting, rightly so! There's a lot of [blood and guts] in the show, and I think that mounts up in Season Two. I'm not squeamish at all, thank God."



The Art and Making Of Penny Dreadful by Sharon Gosling is available now from Titan Books.

Green's performance was the highlight of the season.



The Dublin set was suitably creepy and atmospheric.



Timothy Dalton's grief-stricken Malcolm has to deal with the consequences of his failure.

Timothy Dalton, who stars as the driven Malcolm, hammers home the unrelenting nature of the filming process. "It's long, wet, dank, miserable and depressing," he intones. "But the work's good. Good work is always enjoyable, a good challenge is always enjoyable. And that's what we're here to do."

At first glance, *Penny Dreadful* didn't seem like the kind of series that would put its cast through such emotional torture. A lavish Gothic horror set in Victorian London could have easily prioritised the gorgeous costumes (designed by the legendary Gabriella Pescucci) and stunning sets (not to mention the beautiful cast), but it quickly became apparent that writer John Logan wasn't interested in anything superficial. The show looked heavenly, but put its characters through hell.

"Well, the show is called *Penny Dreadful*!" Logan exclaims when we ask if we can expect to see our heroes go through a similarly tough time. "Yes, because those things that bond us as human beings which are my interest as a dramatist, whether it's a play or a movie, is the search for love, is the search for acceptance, and if that search is satisfied there's no story. And whether they learn to love themselves and the beasts that they are, either literally or figuratively, or learn to accept the world around them and how they fit into it, there has to be an ongoing story to me."



Season One was focused on Malcolm's hunt for his daughter Mina. Along the way we learned about Vanessa Ives' (Eva Green) bond with a demon and saw her fiendish possession. We saw Dr Frankenstein (Harry Treadaway) hounded by his Creature (Rory Kinnear), who in turn was tormented by his inability to connect with humanity, and finally witnessed the transformation of Ethan Chandler (Josh Hartnett), an American gunslinger running from a dark secret that turned out to be lycanthropic in nature. This band of tortured souls did finally find Mina, but that hunt didn't end well. This year, the game is a little different.

"Last season they were hunters; this season they are hunted," teases Logan. "I look at Season One as the chance to introduce the audience to the characters and the world, so essentially we're putting the chessmen on the board. In Season Two, we get to play with them in a really muscular way. Ethan learns exactly what he is; he's hunted by a very dogged inspector, and has drawn closer to Vanessa in every conceivable way due to the pressure on them. Malcolm is drawn into a relationship with Evelyn Poole [played by Helen

McCrory] that alienates him romantically, personally and supernaturally from the rest of the people in the series. And Dr Frankenstein is grappling with a new life form, which is a woman – the woman he killed, Brona Croft – and has to deal with what those emotions, feelings and sensitivities are."

"What we had to do last season was set up characters and create the dynamics between them, and in this season it just gets to mature," adds Hartnett. "It just feels like a richer version of *Penny Dreadful*."

PLAYING WITH THE FATES OF HIS CHARACTERS INVOLVES INTRODUCING SOMETHING THAT THE FIRST SEASON DIDN'T REALLY HAVE: A PROPER VILLAIN, in the form of McCrory's Evelyn. "This season it's a more linear narrative, and there's an adversary," enthuses Logan. "We embrace witchcraft. The quest they're on is to battle Evelyn Poole, who lives in the world of the occult and the supernatural, as they learn more about themselves. Last season we had the vampires, brooding and silent creatures, and now we have a proper villain,

VAMPING OUT

SCIENTIFICALLY DETERMINING THE EXTENT TO WHICH EVA GREEN HAS DOMINATED HER FILMS

THE GOLDEN COMPASS (2007)

Serafina Pekkala

A small role in the forgettable Chris Weitz adaptation of Philip Pullman's classic novel. Not particularly memorable.



FRANKLYN (2008)

Emilia/Sally

Green plays a suicidal artist in this underrated fantasy-noir/real-world hybrid and delivers a fierce, hypnotic performance.



PERFECT SENSE (2011)

Susan

Gives a grounded, emotional turn in this tragic romantic sci-fi in which the human race loses their senses one by one.





Season Two sees the cast of *Penny Dreadful* go from being hunters to the hunted.

and we enjoy her immensely.”

The exact nature of Poole’s villainy is kept from us, although we’re given teasers here and there (the word ‘necromancy’ comes up), but everyone is keen to stress how good McCrory is. She appeared in two episodes of last season as ‘Madame Kali’, most notably hosting the séance where a possessed Vanessa tormented Malcolm by channelling his missing daughter (“I’m shitting blood now, father!”). In Season Two, she’s set to make life hell for our heroes.

“She’s one of the most powerful, because she wants what she wants,” explains McCrory. “She wants it more than anyone else. This is a battle of faith, and who has the strongest faith will win. She’s on the side of him down there rather than him up there... it’s an extraordinary role, and [I’m] kicking it into touch as best I can.”

“Helen McCrory’s a piece of dynamite,” grins Dalton. “She’s wonderful. Little girl, powerful, packs a hell of a punch. I’m thrilled to have been working with her, she’s a knock-out.” It won’t take long for Evelyn to get close to Malcolm, as Dalton tells us that Season Two finds him as lost as he’s ever been. “He and Vanessa were the backbone

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**MALCOLM
AND
VANESSA
WERE THE
BACKBONE
FOR SEASON
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MISTAKES**
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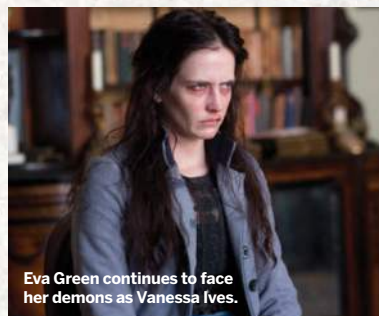
TIMOTHY DALTON

for Season One, that quest to rescue his daughter, and he fails,” he explains. “Not only has he lost his daughter, he is a man with a rather monstrous ego! It hurts him in lots of ways, and he is left picking up the pieces. A vulnerable man makes mistakes, and he meets [Evelyn]. She’s consolation for him, and that has disastrous consequences! A very bad choice! A terrible choice!”

Speaking of choices, Dr Frankenstein made a fairly significant one at the end of Season One when he agreed to the Creature’s demands to make him a Bride, and poor Brona finds herself in a very different situation when Season Two begins. The question of how exactly these two creatures will interact is one of *Penny Dreadful*’s most enticing.

“It’s a perverse relationship, I’ll say that!” teases Piper when we catch up with her on a break from shooting one of the series’ climactic scenes. “It moves around. There’s a lot of feeling. She has a quest and she wants him on board, so how she goes about that, with her great tools of manipulation, but whether it’s born through genuine love you’ll have to wait and see.”

Kinnear is in full make-up and costume when he comes to relieve Piper in the interview corridor, and it’s tricky not to stare at his prosthetics as he ponders the Creature’s love life. “There are a few options for the Creature in Season Two,” he tells us. “He gets taken under the wing of another family, so I guess a viewer should



Eva Green continues to face her demons as Vanessa Ives.

PENNY DREADFUL

be left wondering where his love might come from. It certainly explores the avenue of the Creature’s heart yet again, and there are as many downs as ups!”

As for the Creature’s relationship with the good Doctor, Kinnear assures us that things are smoother... for now. “There is a simpatico in the sense Victor knows what he has to do to get the Creature off his back, and the Creature wants Victor to do that,” he explains. “So there is a meeting of minds or a movement towards a shared goal, but the bad blood hasn’t been smoothed over.”

While Kinnear has had a season of taking on an iconic role, it’s now Piper’s turn to put a new spin on the Bride of Frankenstein. “It’s brilliant!” she exclaims. “And terrifying in equal measure, because it’s such an iconic figure. But I feel like we’re bringing a new focus entirely, and there’s something romantic and beautiful about the interpretation. Her memories are of Brona, but her current manifestation is unique to what’s been before. Physically, obviously it’s very different, and I would say that personality-wise it’s radically different.”

We’ll also get to see Hartnett’s Ethan exploring his lycanthropic secret after going full wolf-man at the end of last season’s finale. “I knew that I was going to be playing a wolf-man from the get-go,” remembers Hartnett. “But it was only the first two scripts that we were allowed to read. So as far as how he would be revealed as a werewolf or how he would be revealed as the type of person he ends up becoming in this second season, I had no idea.”

Although we’re on set a couple of weeks before everything is locked away for another year, the sense of excitement is still palpable. Every one of the cast and crew seems eager for the world of the show to expand, and Logan tells us that he’s hoping for many more seasons yet.

“Someone asked me, ‘What do you do on your hiatus from *Penny Dreadful*?’ and I said ‘I’m writing the next season,’” he laughs. “I wanted to write a Charles Dickens novel. I wanted to write a story that kept going in instalments. One of the joys for me in the second season is I find the characters more interesting. It’s like falling in love, in a way. If it’s true love, it keeps going, because there’s always new things being illuminated. I do this not for the money, I do it not to be away from sleeping in my own bed for six months; I do it because I love the show. These characters are so important to me, I cherish them. I cherish their pain and I celebrate their bravery.”

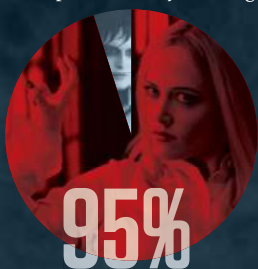


Penny Dreadful Season Two is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.

DARK SHADOWS (2012)

Angelique Bouchard

Green storms into Tim Burton’s muddled update and gleefully steals every scene she’s in. Triumphant scenery chewing.



95%

300: RISE OF AN EMPIRE (2014)

Artemisia

Faced with the overblown ridiculousness of this sequel to Zack Snyder’s zeitgeist-y shoutathon, Green sensibly decides to steal the movie.



80%

PENNY DREADFUL (2014-)

Vanessa Ives

Penny Dreadful is definitely an ensemble show, but with frequent possession sequences and fabulous costumes, it’s Green’s show to steal when she wants to.



60%



Here be DRAGONS

WITH OUR FAVOURITE HORROR SHOW RETURNING TO SKY LIVING, MADS MIKKELSEN, HUGH DANCY AND BRYAN FULLER TELL SCIFINOW ABOUT HANNIBAL'S NEW DIRECTION, TAKING ON RED DRAGON AND FACING EACH SEASON LIKE IT WAS THEIR LAST

BRYAN FULLER KNOWS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE A SHOW CANCELLED WITHOUT GETTING A PROPER FINALE. SO HE WAS DETERMINED THAT WASN'T GOING TO BE the case for *Hannibal*, which was sadly cancelled, with Season Three being their last. "Our goal with the last two seasons was to have an ending," he explains. "And also have the promise of a continuation, that there is much more story to be had after this point, but if there isn't, you feel a complete story was told. I don't ever want to get caught again with my pants down as I have in

past shows, of not having a landing plan. So we land the plane after every season, and whether we get it up in the air again is a question yet to be answered."

Landings are all very well and good, but that Season Two finale left Will Graham (Hugh Dancy), Jack Crawford (Laurence Fishburne), Alana Bloom (Caroline Dhavernas) and Abigail Hobbs (Kacey Rohl) all bleeding, broken and dying as Hannibal (Mads Mikkelsen) stepped out into the rain and made his escape. "I suppose if you don't come back, better to have given it some kind of conclusive ending," opines Dancy. "It felt like an appropriately grand ending to that season. The first season Bryan had explained to me, 'You're going to throw up an ear.' Season Two, I knew that we had to build to a point where not only was Hannibal going to cut me open, but that I would kind of turn into that embrace. I'm glad we didn't end there!" Is there more in store next season? "Oh yes!" exclaims Fuller with a gale of laughter. "In perhaps a clearer, more disturbing way..."

It came as a surprise to many when *Hannibal's* third season was announced

to be its last, but it is set to be a feast, utilising elements from the *Hannibal* novel before launching into *Red Dragon* in its second half. Jack and Alana are definitely back, but it's not clear what state they'll be in (don't put elaborate dream sequences past this show). It's a serious break, jumping from wintry Baltimore to the upper echelons of Florence's high society, into the dark, lurid details of Hannibal's past and tackling the first published Lecter story, with its elaborately tattooed serial killers and flaming wheelchairs. There's no resting on laurels here; this is an ambitious undertaking that ditches the central doctor-patient dynamic of the Hannibal-Will relationship.

"I think we achieved something quite special in the first two seasons," Mikkelsen tells us. "We elaborated on one story, and it became a bromance between these two characters. It went from a horror story to a heartbreaking drama, and we almost forgot the horror part. I think that was quite an achievement, and it had to shift gear; we can't sit around doing the same things anymore."



The start of Season Three sees all the cast picking up the pieces after last year's epic (and bloody) finale.

"You have to break that paradigm at a certain point," agrees Dancy. "Even just to put it back together."

Season Three will begin where that finale left off, with Hannibal and his therapist Dr Bedelia Du Maurier (Gillian Anderson) on the run in Florence. "Well, that's where all the stuff he loves is, right?" laughs Mikkelsen. "That's where the truffles, the wine, the great art is from. There was a reason he had to escape that place, but now he's back."

"It was such a strange mix of tones that I think worked really well for us," Fuller enthuses. "Just looking at the first episode, which is very Patty Highsmith and *The Talented Mr Ripley*, yet also a different level of black comedy. I also look at it and see the DNA of all of its parents, in James Bond films and Hammer Horror, and it feels like we're doing something that we haven't done in the first two seasons tonally, stylistically and narratively. It just feels fresh and like a nice reinvention of the show without completely changing what the nature of the show is."

Fans of the Harris novels will tell you that Florence is where Hannibal is hiding after the events of *The Silence Of The Lambs*, where Inspector Rinaldo

Pazzi realises that there's something off about the dapper aesthete at the museum. Naturally, there'll be some twists on the storyline, given its new place in the chronology, but the addition of the consistently unreadable Bedelia is something entirely new, and promises a tantalising and dangerous dynamic.

**THERE'S A
MYSTERIOUS
PAST THAT WE
DON'T ENTIRELY
UNDERSTAND**
BRYAN FULLER

"Absolutely," Fuller tells us. "You have this suave, sophisticated couple who seem almost like undercover spies, as opposed to two people who are on the lam. So we get to play up all of those wonderful archetypes of the spy thriller and going undercover... to complete their mission, as it were! And

there is such a clever quality to Gillian's performance; she goes from these very serious pontificating scenes about the nature of what they're doing to virtually a broader comedy. She always keeps it emotionally honest, but she is laugh-out-loud funny. We got to see further out into our environment and what we could accomplish on the show that we haven't before."

Florence also brings Hannibal closer to his roots, and this season will begin the process of showing us where he came from. A big part of that is Chiyo (Tao Okamoto), who is an interpretation of the Lady Murasaki character from *Hannibal Rising*, and could provide Will with some crucial answers – if she wants to. "I find myself going back to his origins," explains Dancy. "I'm trying to understand finally who and what exactly Hannibal is. So I go back to his childhood and his sister Mischa, and everything else that relates to that, and meet [Chiyo]. She has the same kind of powerfully mixed feelings about Hannibal as I do. She's devoted to him in one way and kind of captivated by him in every sense of the word. I find her exactly at the point when I might need a companion in that sense."

Hannibal (Mads Mikkelsen) has escaped to Italy – but will he remain there?



That question of understanding Hannibal is a tricky one, and Fuller tells us that the idea of explaining the character's past, and how he came to be, had to be approached delicately. "We were very careful not to over-explain it, but to tell it almost in the mood of a Hammer horror film," he says. "There's a mysterious past that we don't entirely understand, but we get glimpses to. It's a little bit like *Rebecca*, to homage Dr Du Maurier's namesake. You don't want to see Boba Fett palling around with his dad or Darth Vader as a little kid, but you do want to say that this man has a history before he made it to Baltimore. And is he the Devil?"

"Personally, I've never found [his past] super-interesting," opines Mikkelsen. "I've always thought it would be banal if you were to explain who he is by saying that something happened in his childhood. I think we are quite elegantly avoiding that. We get to know little bits and pieces about him, but in his world and definitely in my world, that's not the reason why he is what he is. He's always been like this."

But what of Hannibal's hunter, Will Graham? "What's intriguing about Good Will Hunting for Hannibal Lecter is how

Will has been changed after the events of the finale," enthuses Fuller. That finale left him literally gutted, and the scars left by his former therapist are obviously more than skin deep. "It's not entirely clear to us, or even to Will, what that hunt is about," teases Dancy. "It's like he's completely cleared the decks and almost cleared himself to go off on this quest, and what he's going to discover, and what he wants to do when he gets to Hannibal, he doesn't even know. It's not just, 'Right, I'm going to get you!'"

"It's not a separation [Hannibal's] pleased with," says Mikkelsen. "And he's doing his very best to place some marks about his whereabouts, and hopefully Will Graham will be looking for him, and if he doesn't find him, at least it will be a great comfort to know that he's out there looking for him. He's mildly obsessed with Will, so he has to be part of his life somehow, whether it's from a distance or very close, time will tell."

However Will deals with the trauma and reconciles his conflicted feelings about the man he's hunting for, we know that a time jump is coming at the season's halfway point that will begin the *Red Dragon* story, introducing not only the horrifying serial killer Francis

Anatomy for the ULTIMATE FANDOM

A FAN-FRIENDLY CREATOR

How the people involved interact with their fans can make or break a show's following. It's important that your maitre d' understands the audience, loves the show as much as they do, and has fun with their Twitter account.

PRESENTATION

Much as foodies want to Instagram their dinner, TV fans want to Tumblr their favourite shows. Make it look wonderfully stylish, and make sure to give your characters plenty of GIF-friendly reactions.

GET PEOPLE TALKING

This isn't as easy as it sounds. You can't just deliver shocks endlessly (though this helps); you need to know your audience and what they're going to respond to.

'SHIPPING'

All the parts need to be functioning for an excellent show, but we all love to watch two characters build a relationship. Don't be afraid to really explore this.

GUTS

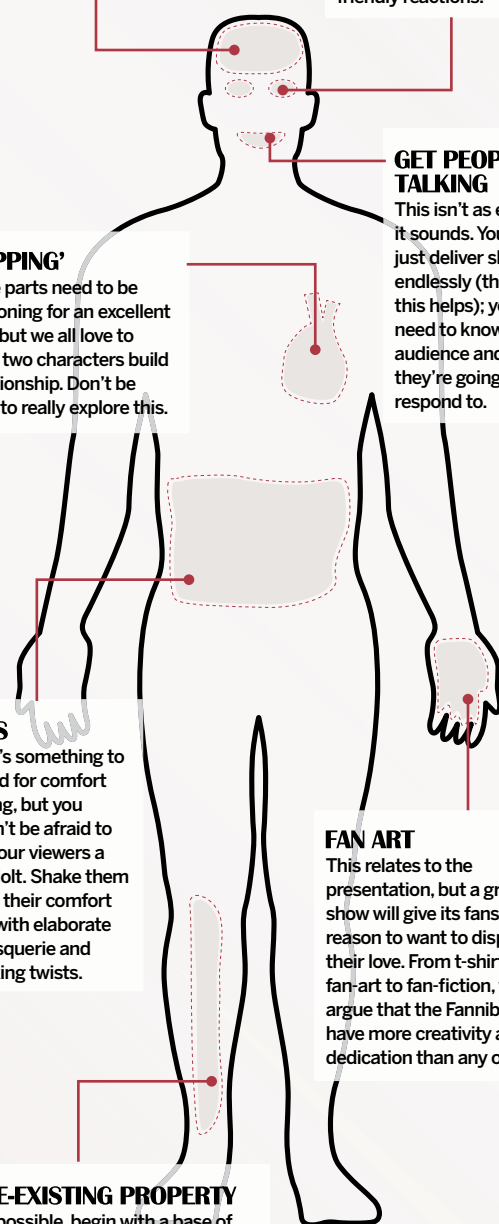
There's something to be said for comfort viewing, but you mustn't be afraid to give your viewers a good jolt. Shake them out of their comfort zone with elaborate grotesquerie and shocking twists.

FAN ART

This relates to the presentation, but a great show will give its fans reason to want to display their love. From t-shirts to fan-art to fan-fiction, we'd argue that the Fannibals have more creativity and dedication than any other.

A PRE-EXISTING PROPERTY

When possible, begin with a base of something that has already been a pop culture phenomenon. Roll out the books and films, but we're going to do something very different with them.



MAN VS FOOD

— From the desk of Jack Crawford —



LOIN OF PORK

Eaten by Jack Crawford

I didn't even think twice about it, but there's a very good chance that this was the loin of a girl, not of a pig. What have I done?

RABBIT

Eaten by Jack Crawford

He told me it was rabbit. I said he should have hopped faster. Oh god...

FOIE GRAS

Eaten by Jack and Bella Crawford

Hannibal reassured me that the foie gras was from an ethical butcher. I see now that he was talking about himself. The ethical butcher is him.

LAMB TONGUE

Eaten by Frederick Chilton and Alana Bloom

Alana tells me Hannibal remarked that it was a particularly chatty lamb. I'm thankful to have not been invited to this old friends' dinner. Oh... I see.

SEA URCHINS

Eaten by Jack Crawford

I mean, the sea urchins must have been sea urchins... you can't fake sea urchins. I couldn't place the fish though... surely not?

ASSORTED CANAPÉS

Eaten by dinner guests

Price and Zeller ran checks on these at the lab, and thank god, they were all animal meat. I had several.

SACRAMONTE OMELETTE

Eaten by Jack Crawford

He said there was liver in it. If I'm being brutally honest, I'm pretty sure that had to have been people. He's not just going to give me chicken liver, is he?

KHOLEDET

Eaten by Jack Crawford and Will Graham

I'm confident that the anchovies were just anchovies. I could worry about what the gelatine was made out of, but at this point I'm just going to give myself a pass.

Dolarhyde, but also Will's wife Molly Foster. "That was exciting, to break the show into two distinct chapters," Fuller tells us. "We are able to see two different versions of the character in different circumstances and have two exciting beginnings, middles and an ends. We're greedy with our climaxes, and we want two for each go."

"It was certainly quite weird to finish one episode on a Thursday and then come back on the Friday and think, 'Right, three years later!'" remembers Dancy. "But Molly is played by an actress named Nina Arianda, who I know very well, and we've worked together on stage just the two of us, so that really assisted me in terms of going straight into an established marriage."

It's thrilling to see it diving headlong into the Harris texts. Fuller has clearly enjoyed his role as a "Thomas Harris mash-up DJ", and has teased various events and characters from later in the novels, but having established its own identity, it's time to take on those iconic moments. "It's very satisfying, because the novel *Red Dragon* for me is such a toy box; it's a really rich story, and one that I think is on some level perhaps the romantic story I've ever read!" laughs Fuller. "The idea that you have Francis

Dolarhyde, this horrible murderer of families, falling in love with a blind woman, taking her to the zoo where she can't see the animals, but has arranged for her to touch the animals, is such an elegant and eloquent gesture that it's swoon-worthy, if it weren't for the fact that he murders families and fucks the corpses of the mothers."

The casting of that murderous 'shy boy' and the unfortunate Reba McClane is spot on. Reba, whose non-judgemental warmth and general life-force throws Dolarhyde into a confusing tail-spin of morality, will be played by *True Blood*'s Rutina Wesley, while *The Hobbit*'s Richard Armitage has taken the role of the conflicted killer.

"The head of casting at NBC said Rutina Wesley, and I just thought, 'Oh that's a great idea. Let's just cast her,'" remembers Fuller. "She's so wonderful in the role and her chemistry with Richard Armitage, who has surpassed all expectations. We've had so many wonderful conversations about the nature of Francis Dolarhyde's that it's been such a rejuvenating experience going into finishing up a third season, and having that fresh bolt of energy of somebody coming in from the outside with as much ownership and

The thrust of the season will be the game of cat-and-mouse between Hannibal and Will.



Margot Verger (Katharine Isabelle) will suffer further at the hands of her brother.

investment into the world and the role that the regular actors who've been here for three years have."

While Fuller's excitement about tackling some of the novel's key sequences is very much in evidence (and somewhat spoilery), Dancy tells us that viewers who have read the books and seen the movies shouldn't expect to know what's coming. "We're going to put our own spin on it," he tells us. "Obviously, it's not going to play out exactly according to the novel, because what's the point of spending two and a half seasons upending people's expectations, only to entirely play it according to form? We've got six or seven hours to play out something that previously has only ever been done in two. There's an opportunity to scour the source material, to try and get some of that real pathos and empathy that Thomas Harris brought to Dolanhyde."

We also shouldn't forget about Hannibal's patients, the tormented and tormenting Vergers, played by Katharine Isabelle and Joe Anderson (the latter replacing Michael Pitt). Mason's self-disfigurement ("I'm full of myself!") was one of the second season's grisly highlights, and Fuller tells us that he and his sister Margot will continue to

play a significant role. "Katie Isabelle has outdone herself in this season, she's got a lot more to play, and there's a lot more horrors that her brother has committed against her! She really steps up to the plate in a magnificent way, and Joe Anderson stepping into Michael Pitt's shoe was such an interesting breath of fresh air as well, because he

HE'S MILDLY
OBSESSED WITH
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TO BE PART OF HIS
LIFE SOMEHOW
MADS MIKKELSEN

took a slightly different approach to the character as Michael did."

"I didn't want Joe to be trapped by feeling, 'I have to do an impression of what Michael Pitt was doing', which is an unfortunate trap to put an actor into, so I made it very clear that I wanted him to make this his performance, and it turns

out he was a very inspired by what Gary Oldman did with the role in the Ridley Scott film. The damage that's been done to him by Hannibal is much more immediate than what you've seen with the Oldman character, someone who's been living with this for 20 years and was cool and calculating, whereas Joe Anderson is bringing a little more rage to what Hannibal had done to him."

What's exciting, when considering these various iconic characters and elements from the books and films, is how our consideration of them has changed in relation to *Hannibal* the show. We're no longer thinking about if and how *Hannibal* will live up to the canon. We're thinking about whether *Hannibal* can live up to the high standard it has set for itself. "Yeah, that's a good thing, right!" laughs Mikkelsen. "How the audience is going to embrace this, we don't know. We can only hope for the best and cross our fingers."

As sad as we are to see the series end, Fuller has suggested that he'd love to do a *Hannibal* movie down the line. With that cast and this crew, our mouths are watering just thinking about it. ✎

Hannibal Season Three is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.



It remains to be seen what state Jack (Laurence Fishburne) is in after last year's finale.



Whatever happens, you can expect to see Hannibal go down fighting.



COMMUNITY SERVICE

AFTER A REUNION, A PUNCH-UP AND AN EXECUTION, THINGS ARE REALLY GETTING SERIOUS IN THE WALKING DEAD FOR SEASON SIX. WE TALK TO EXECUTIVE PRODUCER GREG NICOTERO, SHOWRUNNER SCOTT M GIMPLE AND MORE ABOUT THE BACKLASH FROM SEASON FIVE AND WHAT'S ON THE WAY FOR ALEXANDRIA...

THE WALKING DEAD HAS BEEN A CHAMPION OF HORROR FROM THE GET-GO. IT TOOK WHAT WAS PRETTY A PRETTY NICHE INTEREST THING AND BROUGHT IT TO THE masses, averaging 5-6 million US viewers with its first season. Five seasons on, it is pulling in threefold that. The appeal is universal. Anyone can enjoy a zombie apocalypse. The only viewing requirement is a strong stomach. Just when it seems like the show can't get any more gory, someone gets their foot hacked off and eaten. Characters drop like flies. If Season Five proved anything it's that no one is safe, and each death is more horrible than the last.

A real turning point last season was the death of Noah (Tyler James Williams). Though he hadn't been in the series for long – he joined the group after Beth was shot and killed half a season ago – his passing made quite an impact. After being torn apart by walkers in front of Glenn (Steven Yeun), he became a symbol of lost hope.

"That's one of the first deaths that we've ever done where there was a character that was in that close of a proximity," explains Greg Nicotero, the show's special effects make-up artist, executive producer and director. "The fact that Glenn is protected by the revolving door and Noah allowed Glenn to experience his death and also feel the futility of not being able to help, and watch it happen. It was something that was important, and it's funny, because a lot of people have talked about how gruesome and

how horrible that death was, but the purpose of it was for Glenn to witness his friend torn apart in front of him and how that changes him, because we really get a sense that Glenn... he's a bit lost, you know?

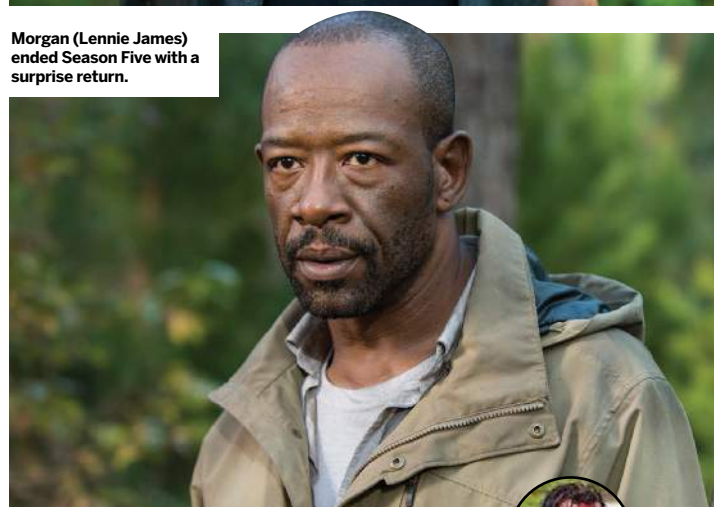
"In episode nine, when Tyreese (Chad L Coleman) dies, Glenn basically says to Rick, 'Listen, I'm not the guy I was at the beginning of this when we left Terminus.' If you remember in Terminus, Glenn stops and says, 'We have to open this train car, we have to let these people out, that's who we are.' And now that's not who they are. Now he's basically saying, 'Listen, I wouldn't open that train car door now, I would have just left them, because that's what we need to do to survive.' So the fact that he watches his friend torn apart in front of him has a tremendous emotional impact on him."

Yeun believes Glenn, like the rest of the group, still has a long way to go. "We have six seasons, and we should be at an old show stage, especially for a serialised show," he says. "We always thought we may hit our ceiling at three or four and then just break down. But I'll say, being on the inside, not just saying this because I love the show. Sincerely, we are telling better stories than we ever have before. I love theatre, but I couldn't do prolonged theatre, because I'd get so anxious about doing the same thing over and over. I'm genuinely so excited for this season, to be on set every single time,



Daryl (Norman Reedus) is still fighting to survive the end of the world.

Morgan (Lennie James) ended Season Five with a surprise return.



Maggie (Lauren Cohan) has got Glenn's back.

because something is happening. I don't know what's happening, I don't know what it is, it's the writing, it's the acting... but we are like a fine wine that continues to age."

When Rick (Andrew Lincoln), Carl (Chandler Riggs), Daryl (Norman Reedus) and the rest of the gang first arrived in Alexandria, it looked like all their prayers had been answered. After the prison, the road to Terminus, Terminus itself and Father Gabriel's church, they had finally found a place that they could possibly call home. It had water, it had electricity, and it had community spirit. It even had Christmas parties. But like everywhere else they've been, the group doesn't like it and maintain their collective 'trust no one but yourself' mindset. Like everywhere

WELCOME TO THE RICKTATORSHIP

If you want to survive the end of the world, you're going to have to live by Rick's rules. This isn't a democracy any more

Rick makes the rules.

Only Rick can break the rules.

It's us and the dead. We survive this by pulling together.

Everyone gets assigned babysitting duty. This is not optional.

If you have arms you have to learn how to use a gun.

If in doubt, shoot to kill.

If you do something Rick doesn't like, you're going to pay for it.

Brush your teeth.

else, Alexandria had a strange effect on the group's character development.

"I remember reading the script where Carol starts going undercover and she's playing the homemaker, and I thought, 'Wow, that's really weird,' but it's such a shock," Nicotero tells us. "Even when we shot the scene with her and Daryl where she comes out onto the porch and Daryl looks at her and she's like, 'Going off to make the casseroles!' And it was ridiculous to see her dressed that way, and seeing them clean and without any blood or dirt or sweat on them. Then Carol comes out with these pastel colours, and I think we all had the exact same reaction. Norman ad-libbed that great line, 'You look ridiculous!' as she walks away. It was such a shock, but when you really think about what Carol's doing, and you think 'Okay, Carol's preparing herself as a sort of undercover agent.'

"It was a fascinating move for her to make, because she's doing it to protect her group. And Rick is doing what he needs to do to protect his group. So I love that everybody has different reactions to what's going on. Michonne is desperate to find somewhere to live, so she's probably one of the first that's going to be on board, and then you have people like Carl, who says, 'I'm worried that if we stay here we're going to get weak.' So they actually go outside of the gates, people like Sasha and Carl go outside and kill walkers just so they don't lose the edge that they have from having lived out there."

Similarly, the residents of Alexandria have also had their lives turned upside down since the old gang showed up and disturbed the peace. With the two groups pushed together and entwined in each other's lives, everyone is suspicious and everyone is a liability.

"They found a safe place now, but that doesn't necessarily mean that if that place is safe now, that that place is going to be safe [in] a couple of months," says Nicotero. "It just seems like once Rick and his group got there, there's a lot of weird shit that's happening at Alexandria, and the people that live there blame them. The people that live there are like, 'Listen, we were fine until you assholes got here. And now that you're here, we should have never brought you in because now people are dying. There are walkers that could potentially have been attracted to this place because of them,' so it's a very unique contrast that we're showing, because Rick and his people look at them as if they're lambs, and they look at Rick and his people as if they're killers.

"[Showrunner] Scott Gimple is a good student of the graphic novel, and I really think that part of the way that we keep it fresh is by not having the characters do the same thing over and over again," he says.

"We're able to keep our characters evolving. Looking at where Rick is in Season Five as opposed to where Rick is in Season One is a great gauge to see who he's become, who Glenn has become and who Daryl has become. So I'm really proud of the fact that we've been able to do that quite consistently."

"There's lots of horror, lots of intense emotional things that happen on the show, and actors are dragged through a lot," says Gimple. "People do that in movies, and they're done, go off and do something else. But this is their life for the good part of the year. And I try to honour that. It's not for the faint of heart." That said, hearts are going to get a lot fainter for Season Six considering what Gimple has in store for the characters – especially with the newly introduced Wolves on the loose. "They're not going to be

"THEY'RE NOT GOING TO BE EMOTIONALLY IN THE SAME PLACE AT THE END"
SCOTT M GIMPLE



The zombies are set to get even more gruesome.



The introduction of the Wolves set up a new mystery for Season Six.

emotionally in the same place at the end of the season. None of these folks."

Executive producers David Alpert and Gale Ann Hurd agree that things are getting darker. Alpert says: "The gang has been on the road, never really knowing if they are fully safe. They found a place that, at least for a moment, is a semblance of safety. Not all people may do so well with that."

"It's tough. We never want see anyone die, and discussions in the writers' room are very heated," adds Hurd. "The truth is we have the biggest cast we ever had before. We have like 18 regulars now. That's the biggest cast you'd see on most shows!"

Season Six also sees the return of Morgan (Lennie James). After first appearing early on in Season One, it was two seasons until we saw him again. Another glimpse of him at the end of the Season Five mid-season finale set up the Morgan-centric 'Conquer'. We're sure to see a lot more of him – and where he's been – in this coming season.

"As a matter of fact, I do believe that we had initially intended on Morgan's return to be much sooner, but due to his availability we were unable to secure him as we had wanted to," says Nicotero, "So it's pretty exciting. We keep upping the stakes every season, we keep pulling out bigger and bigger story arcs, and we're taking bigger swings. And we keep pulling it off!"

The Walking Dead Season Six is currently airing on FOX.



Rick (Andrew Lincoln) is focused on keeping Alexandria safe.

The best of the best screen zombies have been competing for the coveted title. Only one can be crowned Mr Zombie Universe 2015...

MR. ZOMBIE UNIVERSE 2015

R

Warm Bodies

Talent: Memory games
Likes: Vinyl and collecting things
Hopes for: The desegregation of humans and zombies

Ed

Shaun Of The Dead

Talent: Impressions
Likes: Gaming and Shaun's mum
Hopes for: A pint and a packet of pig snacks

Michael Jackson

Thriller

Talent: Moonwalking
Likes: Terrorising neighbourhoods and getting down
Hopes for: The return of shoulder pads

Merle

The Walking Dead

Talent: Sword fighting
Likes: Guns and casual racism
Hopes for: Power and revenge

Tarman

Return Of The Living Dead

Talent: Melting and eating brains
Likes: Brains
Hopes for: BRAINS

Bub

Day Of The Dead

Talent: Public speaking
Likes: Music
Hopes for: World peace

Bill Murray

Zombieland

Talent: Being Bill Murray
Likes: Being Bill Murray
Hopes for: A buddy to share in a round of golf

Alpha Male Darkseeker

I Am Legend

Talent: Running
Likes: Not humans
Hopes for: The downfall of humanity

Baby Selwyn

Braindead

Talent: Aerial aerobics
Likes: Going on play dates
Hopes for: A bottle

THE HEAD —*that wears*— THE CROWN

GAME OF THRONES IS BIGGER THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN, BUT THE SHOW HAS TAUGHT US SOME HARSH LESSONS ABOUT POWER AND COMPLACENCY. WE TALK TO THE CAST ABOUT BEING NUMBER ONE AND WHY SEASON 5 WILL BE JUST AS UNPREDICTABLE AND DANGEROUS AS EVER...

THERE ARE VERY FEW TELEVISION SERIES THAT CAN STAND WITH GAME OF THRONES. IN TERMS OF SIZE, SCOPE, POPULARITY, AND RENOWN, THE HBO LEVIATHAN

towers above the competition. *The Walking Dead* might offer gory shocks, *Doctor Who* might have fans covering their ears and shrieking for fear of spoilers, and The CW might have set up home in the geek-friendly forests of Tumblr, but when *Game Of Thrones* rolls out a teaser trailer, everyone clicks full screen and pays attention. When April comes around, there's only one show that everyone's talking about, and the cast are very much aware of it.

"It's sphincter-tightening," laughs Liam Cunningham, who plays Stannis Baratheon (Stephen Dillane)'s faithful right-hand man Davos Seaworth. "The popularity of the show, it focuses the mind a little bit. It's not some dodgy soap where you're just throwing out the lines and going home. I get daunted when I see the scenes that I have to do; I go, 'Oh Christ!' It's all about between action and cut. The rest is, as an actor,





What role will Sansa play in Littlefinger's machinations?



it's out of your hands, and you control the things that you can have control over. After that it's somebody else's problem. So you just try and do the best you can with what you're given."

"I was always very reluctant to admit *Thrones* had become this kind of phenomenon of a TV show," reveals Kit Harington, looking slightly more relaxed than his character, troubled Night's Watchman Jon Snow. "You can only ignore that fact for so long, but you can't take that onto set with you."

"I think it's a good idea if you can force yourself to forget about how big it is," adds John Bradley, who plays Jon's friend Samwell Tarly. "I think that would be a distraction. If I'm doing a scene with Kit, the example I always use is when we found out that people like Barack Obama watch the show. It's not going to help; it's going to be distracting to have that in your mind while you're trying to talk to Jon Snow. It's going to throw you a bit off-course if you say your line and you think, 'I wonder what Mr Obama thought about that.'"

While we can't say for sure what President Obama thought of Season Four – or indeed Snoop Dogg, who retweeted Carice van Houten (Melisandre) much to her delight – we can speak for ourselves and say that we were as impressed as everyone else with the way that showrunners David Benioff and DB Weiss managed to keep the momentum going.

Season Three built to the horrifically shocking 'The Rains Of Castamere', in which the Red Wedding left you either speechless or screaming. Somehow, Season Four raised the stakes and gave us the Purple Wedding, Tyrion (Peter Dinklage) putting an arrow in his father Tywin (Charles Dance), Sansa (Sophie Turner) and Littlefinger (Aiden Gillen) forming an alliance and Arya (Maisie Williams) going off to join the Faceless Men. Oh, and let's not forget Oberyn Martell (Pedro Pascal) being pummelled into a bloody mess by The Mountain (Hafthór Júlíus Björnsson) after a build-up of *Princess Bride* proportions. Resting on its laurels isn't something

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**THE SUCCESS
OF THE SHOW
IS SPHINCTER-
TIGHTENING!**
LIAM CUNNINGHAM

Game Of Thrones does. Every season provides the audience with new shocks, talking points and reasons to howl our surprise/outrage into social media.

If you think the people working on the show take our rabid fandom for granted, you're wrong. Harington tells us that each year brings the same challenge to stun the audience, but Season Five means something special. "I worry every year about it running out of steam," he says. "I think we've got to a point where people who have watched it thus far will finish it. So I don't think it's going to lose its viewership, but it's about keeping that viewership happy and keeping the quality up and making sure we don't do what other – naming no names – TV shows have done in the past, which is finish on a whimper. Some of my favourite TV shows in history, the best season was five, and then they maintained it to the end, but the best season was five. This year's important to me, and all of us, for keeping that standard with some of our favourite TV shows."

"There's such fans of the books, and the fans of the show are just growing and growing and growing," adds Nathalie Emmanuel, who stands at Daenerys Targaryen's (Emilia Clarke) side as her advisor Missandei. "I think almost the responsibility of that, of pleasing the people that are keeping us going, that watch us, that's why we're on a fifth season."

That kind of fanatical fandom also extends to the cast, as several of them announce that Season Five is the first time that they're actively trying to avoid spoilers. Alfie Allen, who plays the ever-more-brutalised Theon Greyjoy (sorry, Reek), tells us that what began as an acting choice became a habit that benefited him as a viewer. "In the third season, I didn't read any of the scripts except my own stuff because I was just in a world where there was nothing – everything that was happening outside that room was irrelevant to me," he remembers. "Now it is quite funny, because I sit there with my friends and I'm like, 'What?' And they're like 'You're on the show, did you not know about this?' So I do like to keep myself as a fan and keep some things unknown to me."

I T'S THE FIRST TIME THAT I HAVEN'T READ THE WHOLE THING," ADDS HARRINGTON. "ALMOST LIKE ALFIE SAID, IT'S LIKE THE TESTER, I WANT TO SEE IT FIRST-HAND, I WANT TO SEE it as a fan. I consider myself a fan of the show, but actually I've never put that to the test as far as not knowing what's coming. So I've spent the whole year with fingers in my ears, because everyone's been having chats around the bar about what happens in their storylines, and I've to go, 'No no no no, don't tell me!' Like a normal fan of the show would. 'Argh spoilers, no!'"

One of the cast who happily admits to reading the entirety of Season Five is Bradley, who reveals that we can certainly expect our jaws to be dropping to the floor. "It's always amazing to read a script and think, 'Oh my god, we've got an unfilmable script here.' And then April rolls around and you

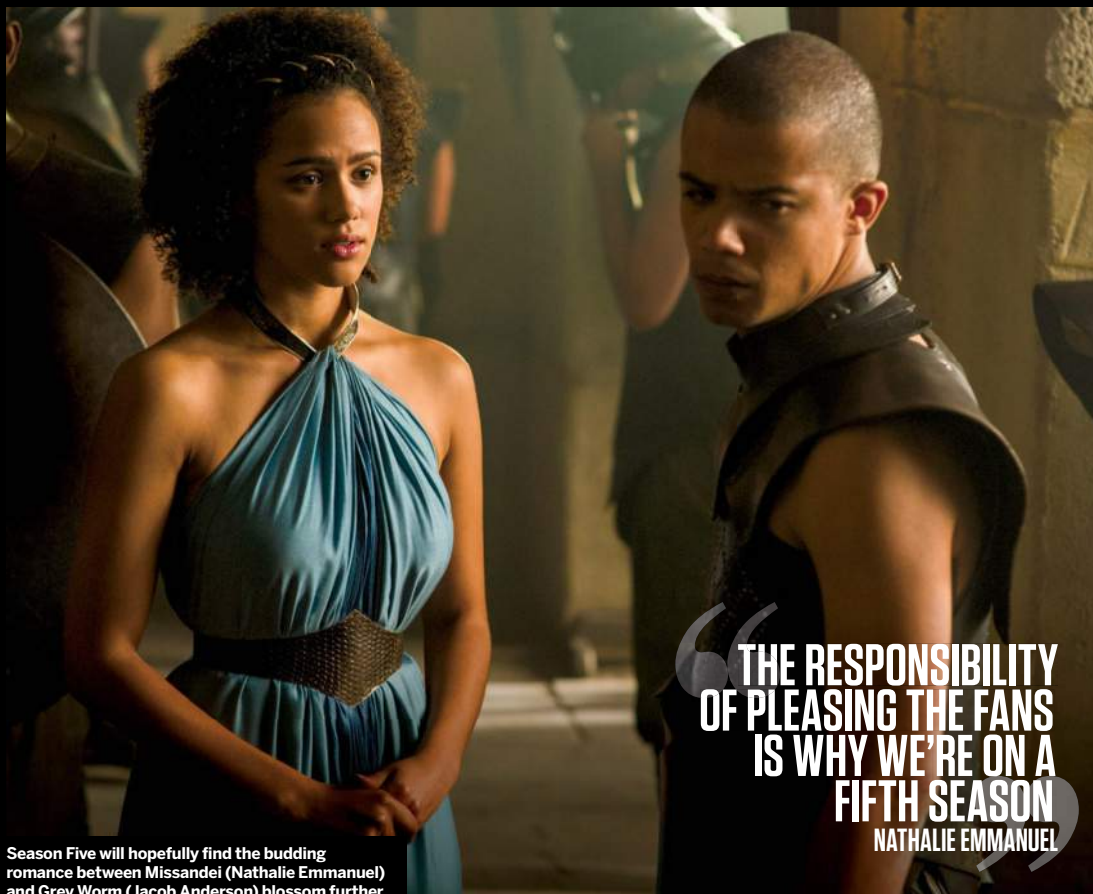
think, 'Oh, well they must have filmed it.' But it is nice to read the words on the page. You can only imagine what all the heads of department are going to do to those words to bring them to life, I'm constantly surprised by how they achieve that. Because if you read some of the directions, they seem crazy and extreme, and almost too extravagant to bring into actuality." "They really were this year," adds Harrington.

"So it seems they've got a real task on their hands, and then you remember that these are all people working on the very top of their game, and then they get their hands on it, and then in April you see what they've done, and it's always breathtaking," concludes Bradley.

Interestingly, prop master Robbie Boake tells us that from a production

standpoint, the fears are pretty similar. "Every year has its own challenges," he explains. "Sometimes they appear to be absolutely insurmountable at times, and then you take a deep breath and say, 'You know what, we've done this before.' There is the comfort of having the experience and the track record of doing some very big things.

"So when something new arrives, and there always is something pretty big in the scripts, you go 'Woah, how are we doing that,' but there's nothing that can't be worked out, and that is the challenge on the show I think, is that we certainly push every year to do something bigger, better, faster, more interesting, and it's never rested. It's consistently got bigger and bigger and bigger."

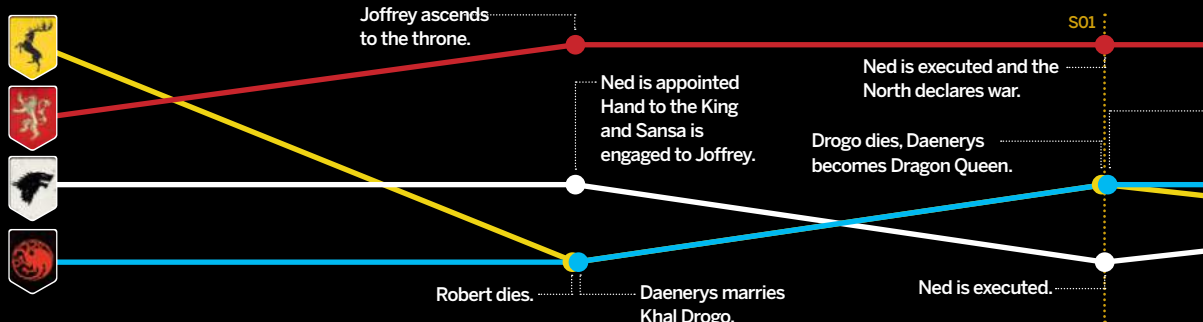


Season Five will hopefully find the budding romance between Missandei (Nathalie Emmanuel) and Grey Worm (Jacob Anderson) blossom further.

“THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PLEASING THE FANS IS WHY WE’RE ON A FIFTH SEASON”
NATHALIE EMMANUEL

King's Landing Standings

How the Houses have fared over the course of four seasons



Cunningham found himself pushed further north – at least as far as Westeros goes – this year, as Season Five begins with Stannis and his forces on the Wall, having rescued Jon Snow and the Night's Watch from the seemingly unstoppable attack of Mance Rayder (Ciarán Hinds) and his Wildlings, and he says he was so stunned by the work that went into creating the visuals that he refused to elaborate on beyond it being "close to the Wall!"

"Yeah, it's ridiculous," he marvels. "We didn't go to Iceland, but there is one area that they had to paint the landscape, and I think it took a month. They actually had to paint Northern Ireland, and it's just extraordinary."

"The crew work so hard, it's unbelievable," adds van Houten.

"And when you walk on a set like that, you cannot believe what you see. It's as if it's been there forever, these sets. They look like castles that were there forever, it's unbelievable. When we come there in the morning it's already prepared, and I'm like, 'What time did they get up? 11 at night?'"

"They were up at 2am," confirms Cunningham.

The arrival of Stannis's forces at the Wall was one of those thrilling moments that only shows as rich and detailed as *Game Of Thrones* can manage; the excitement of seeing plotlines intertwining. Few shows can offer a scene as superficially simple as Brienne of Tarth (Gwendoline Christie) recognising Arya close to the Eerie and make it so heart-wrenching. "You're

Arya Stark," said the warrior, a moment that meant little to the young girl, but so much to all of us who knew how far Brienne had come to find her, although we all knew it wouldn't work out. The look Melisandre gave Jon, however, hints at something much more important to come. "My character is trying throughout the fourth season to get everyone to go north, to go up the Wall," remembers van Houten. "And then we end, we go up the wall, and then we see her clocking Jon Snow, and all of us know that there is something about this guy... which is not revealed until later on!"

The question of Melisandre's motives is one of the most compelling mysteries of *Game Of Thrones*. Since her introduction, the character has

The recently bereaved Ellaria Sand (Indira Varma) alongside newcomer Areo Hotah (DeObia Oparei).



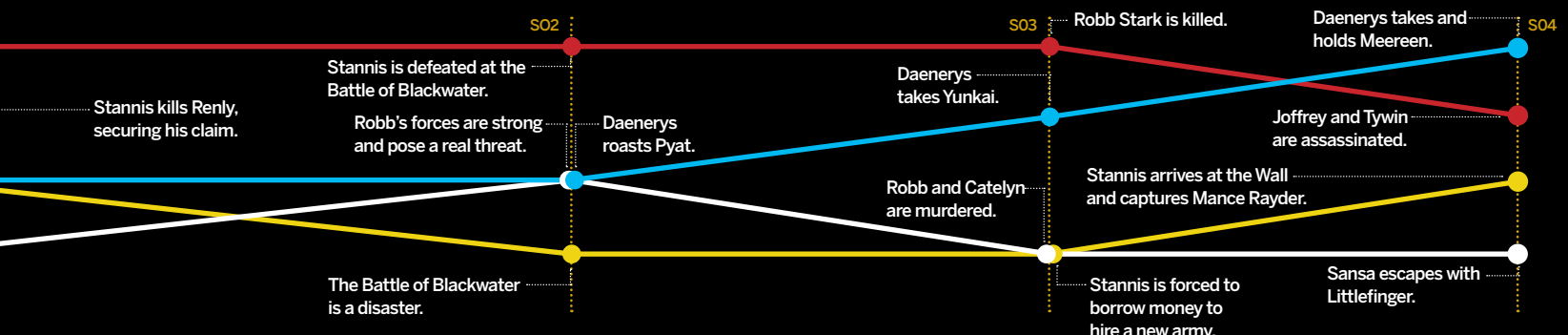
The new season sees Cersei (Lena Headey) finally gain the power she has always craved.



Jonathan Pryce shows up to make things difficult in King's Landing as the High Sparrow.



Daenerys (Emilia Clarke) faces the toughest challenges to her rule yet in Season Five.



very clearly been working to her own agenda, but that agenda is decidedly unclear. Her allegiance is to the Lord of Light, but is her loyalty to Stannis only valid for as long as he is useful? Is her burning heretics and covering easily manipulated teenagers' bodies with leeches all for the greater good?

IT'S HARD, BECAUSE IT'S NOT REALLY CLEAR TO ME EITHER SOMETIMES," REVEALS VAN HOUTEN. "I MEAN, I'D LIKE TO THINK THAT SHE'S DOING IT FOR A GREATER GOOD.

That's the way I try to play it, because otherwise I'm just plain evil, and that's boring to play. So her methods may not be very gentle, they may be very cruel indeed, but I have a feeling that she knows, she can see the bigger picture; she can see what we're really dealing with. All these wars that we're talking about, that's not what we should be fighting for, there's something way bigger than that, that nobody can foresee. And in order to control it or to stop it, we have to make crazy sacrifices, and she doesn't really show that much emotion about that, that's true. That's the way I try to play her, and I have to say that Season Five is very interesting concerning the arc of my character and where she's going."

The depth and complexity of Melisandre's character is in no way

exclusive to her, and Cunningham tells us that the continued high quality of the writing is the reason why we continue to see so many excellent performances and why amazing actors continue to flock to *Game Of Thrones*.

"It's kind of required," he explains. "It's a show about power and legacy and family against this backdrop of dragons and this weird feudal medieval world. But you can't have people who don't know what they're doing; the show has been cast incredibly cleverly. When you've got people of the quality of Peter Dinklage and Diana Rigg and Charles Dance and right through, we could name everybody on this... it's an incredible showcase because of the quality, it all comes down to the writing.

"The writing is magnificent on this, the production values are extraordinary, and the show has turned into a phenomenon because of the quality of it. It's extraordinary, there's not one type of person who watches it. It's right across the board, it's seen as one of the best things that television has ever produced, and quite rightly so, and I think we'd all consider ourselves incredibly lucky to be in it."

"I think for me right now it just seems like normal, because this was my first job," laughs Sophie Turner, who plays the increasingly politically astute



"I'M AN INCREDIBLY LUCKY ACTOR TO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN SOMETHING LIKE THIS"
KIT HARINGTON

It looks like the story of Podrick (Daniel Portman) and Brienne (Gwendoline Christie) will take a departure from the books.





Margaery (Natalie Dormer) may be Queen, but you can bet that Cersei will have something to say about it.

It looks like Stannis (Stephen Dillane) and Jon (Kit Harington) will be a surprise double act.



Things go from bad to worse for Tyrion (Peter Dinklage), on the run after murdering his father.

A Song Of Ice And Fandom

Westeros.org co-founder and co-author of *The World Of Ice And Fire* Elio M García Jr on the world's most devoted fanbase

Few authors have inspired the same level of fanaticism as George RR Martin. The world of *Game Of Thrones* is so deep and detailed that legions of fans have been drawn to it. Elio M García Jr is the co-writer of *The World Of Ice And Fire* with George RR Martin and Linda Antonsson, and he tells us that there is one simple reason for the series' success. "George's incredible skill as a storyteller," he states. "He knows how to weave together a narrative that pushes buttons, that has memorable characters and situations. I can't remember what I had for dinner last Sunday, but I can recite almost word-for-word Eddard Stark's exchange with the three Kingsguard at the Tower of Joy."

Together with Antonsson, García Jr founded Westeros.org and created an online role-playing game based on the series, all with the permission and encouragement of its author. "We wanted to use a fantasy setting that no one else had used, and *A Song Of Ice And Fire* seemed perfect," he remembers. "So we contacted George to ask his

permission... and while we did that, we created a website, just as a way to show we were serious and dedicated. That initial website had our first tries at replicating the heraldry of the Seven Kingdoms, and George was very impressed by it. He gave us permission to create our game, *Blood Of Dragons*, and also sent us batches of names of noble houses and their heraldry."

Since then, the series has only grown in popularity, with the HBO series drawing a whole new area of fandom. "It's grown enormously," he enthuses. "The fandom now includes people who have never actually read the books, and perhaps have no interest in reading them. Though as the show begins to overtake the books, perhaps there'll be new Unsullied, those who choose to be 'book-only' and isolate themselves from potential spoilers from the show."



The World Of Ice And Fire by George RR Martin, Elio M García Jr and Linda Antonsson is available now, published by Harper Voyager.

Sansa Stark, last seen setting out with the Machiavellian Petyr 'Littlefinger' Baelish. "I was 13 [when I started]. All my formative years were spent growing up on a film set, and most of my time was spent on the *Game Of Thrones* set, which is bizarre and difficult for people at home to understand, but it's been like a massive drama class that you can never get at home or school. This is what the industry is for me, and I'm sure it will be crap after this show ends, but when it comes to an end I'll realise how lucky I was to be a part of it, and how huge it was in comparison to so many other things and just how well it's done."

"This could be the one thing, and the only thing that I am known for," concludes Harington. "I'll be very lucky if it is, an incredibly lucky actor to have ever been involved in something like this. It's all downhill from here! I left drama school, and I've got a picture of me, Alfie and Richard Madden [the late Robb Stark] on the very first day of the read through of the pilot. We really do

look like kids, and I felt like a kid back then. I didn't feel like an adult back then. Looking back now, I think I feel like an adult now, I don't know"

NATURALLY, THIS HUMBLE PERSPECTIVE DOESN'T MEAN THAT EVERYONE'S ANXIOUS TO BE OUT OF THE SHOW JUST YET. WITH EVERY PASSING SEASON THE body count gets bigger and bigger, and it's only natural for the cast to worry about whether or not George RR Martin has drawn a line through their names.

"You want to stay with the story, you want to see it through to the end," enthuses Cunningham. "Certainly I do. I don't want to leave before the story finishes, I want to try and stay as long as I can, but I do love the idea of not knowing. We shoot season by season, but a lot of it is done reasonably chronologically as you go along, so apart from reading those scripts we don't know what's coming in the next season – we certainly don't know what's happening in Six. But it's extraordinary

to read them and then play it. It's like life, it rolls out in front of you and you have no idea what's coming. That's kind of cool. Also, my children have got used to wearing shoes which is quite unusual for them!"

"You know that you're definitely coming into the season, whether it's to leave at some point you don't know," explains Emmanuel. "I suppose that could be slightly nerve-wracking, but I think, I feel like that's something that happens a lot on *Game Of Thrones*, and to be killed or to leave or whatever isn't that unlikely and I've kind of accepted that that could happen to my character and I'd be just happy to have been a part of it at all so, and I just hope that it would be done in a nice way or a cool way or something that makes people feel something."

"Valar Morghulis," chuckles Cunningham. Valar Morghulis indeed. ☞

Season Five of *Game Of Thrones* will be available on DVD from 14 March 2016.

Events will conspire to expand the wedge between siblings Cersei and Jaime (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau).



YOU WANT TO STAY WITH THE STORY; YOU WANT TO SEE IT THROUGH TO THE END
LIAM CUNNINGHAM



Dear Margaery...

Struggling to deal with a life-changing event? Wondering how to cope with a potentially deadly social function? Worrying about whether you'll climb the social ladder? Just ask the most gifted operator in all the Seven Kingdoms: our very own Margaery Tyrell!

Dear Margaery...

I recently saw my new uncle push my aunt through a Sky Door. I don't know if I can trust him, but he's proven he knows how to manipulate a situation, and I think he might be the lesser of a lot of evils. What should I do?
S, The Eerie

Dear S, the first lesson to learn is that you should never trust anybody. Not even me, haha! It's vital that you figure out what this uncle of yours can do for you and how devoted he is to you. He's already shown he's capable of murder (although who in Westeros isn't?), so you have to assume that there's at least a chance that he might be looking for a Sky Door to push you through at some point. However, if it looks like he's got your best interests at heart at the moment, there's no harm in playing along, at least for now. Keep your eyes open and see what you can learn from him if he's a master manipulator.

Dear Margaery...

I've recently come into possession of a young charge, but I'm worried she doesn't trust me. What do you recommend?
P, The Eerie

Dear P, most people can be won over with a demonstration of usefulness and understanding. With a younger charge, it can be a little more difficult. I myself recently had great success with a night-time visit and a gift in the form of a cat. Everyone loves a cat.


OBERYN MARTELL
FIGHTDANCE STUDIO

We regret to inform that all future classes are cancelled indefinitely. Any outstanding coupons may be redeemed for their monetary value or brothel discounts. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Dear Margaery...

Having been accused of a crime I didn't commit, I have now committed a bigger one. Should I abandon the kingdom I've known for my whole life, not to mention my family? Actually, the family part isn't too important...
T, address withheld.

Dear T, don't let a crime drag you down. If there's one thing that history has taught us, it's that any misdemeanour can be forgiven or forgotten eventually; it's just a question of how you manage to get your forgiveness. That being said, if you're who I think you are (no names!) there is definitely a pretty serious manhunt currently underway, so I heartily encourage you to get out of town for a while. Similarly, abandoning kingdoms can be a blessing. If your situation isn't working out for you, look for the next best option and move on. I wish you all the best in your travels.

Dear Margaery...

I've worked very hard in politics for many years, but have finally decided to throw it all away for what I believe is right. Did I make the right decision?
V, address withheld.

Dear V, as I said to T (and I think you might be reading this together), there is no shame in letting something go. Sometimes, you've just got to roll the dice and make the difficult choice in order to achieve your desired goal. It's also worth noting that a burned bridge is simply an obstacle to overcome. If things don't work out in your new situation, a man with your talents can always find a way to be useful again.

Dear Margaery...

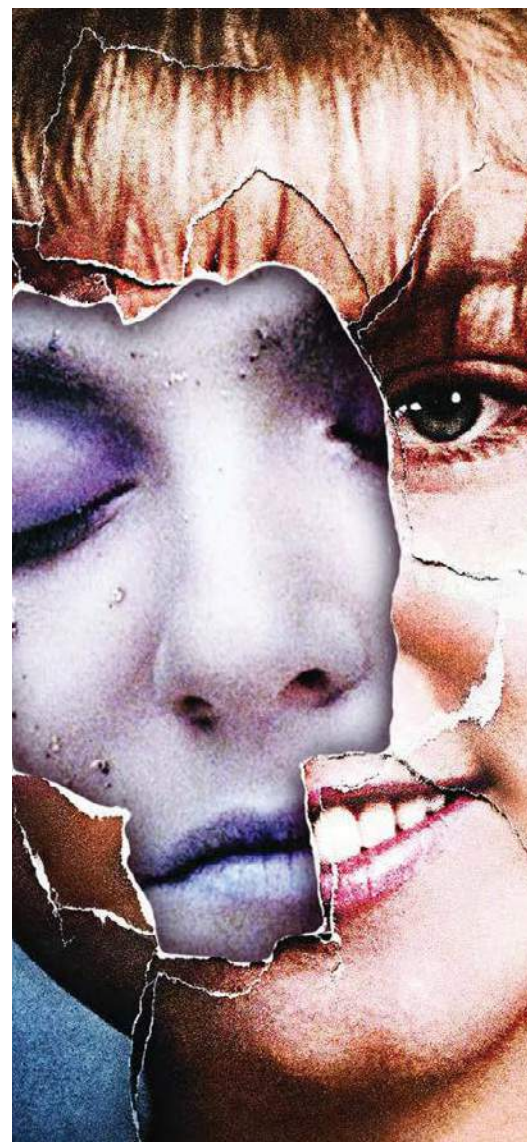
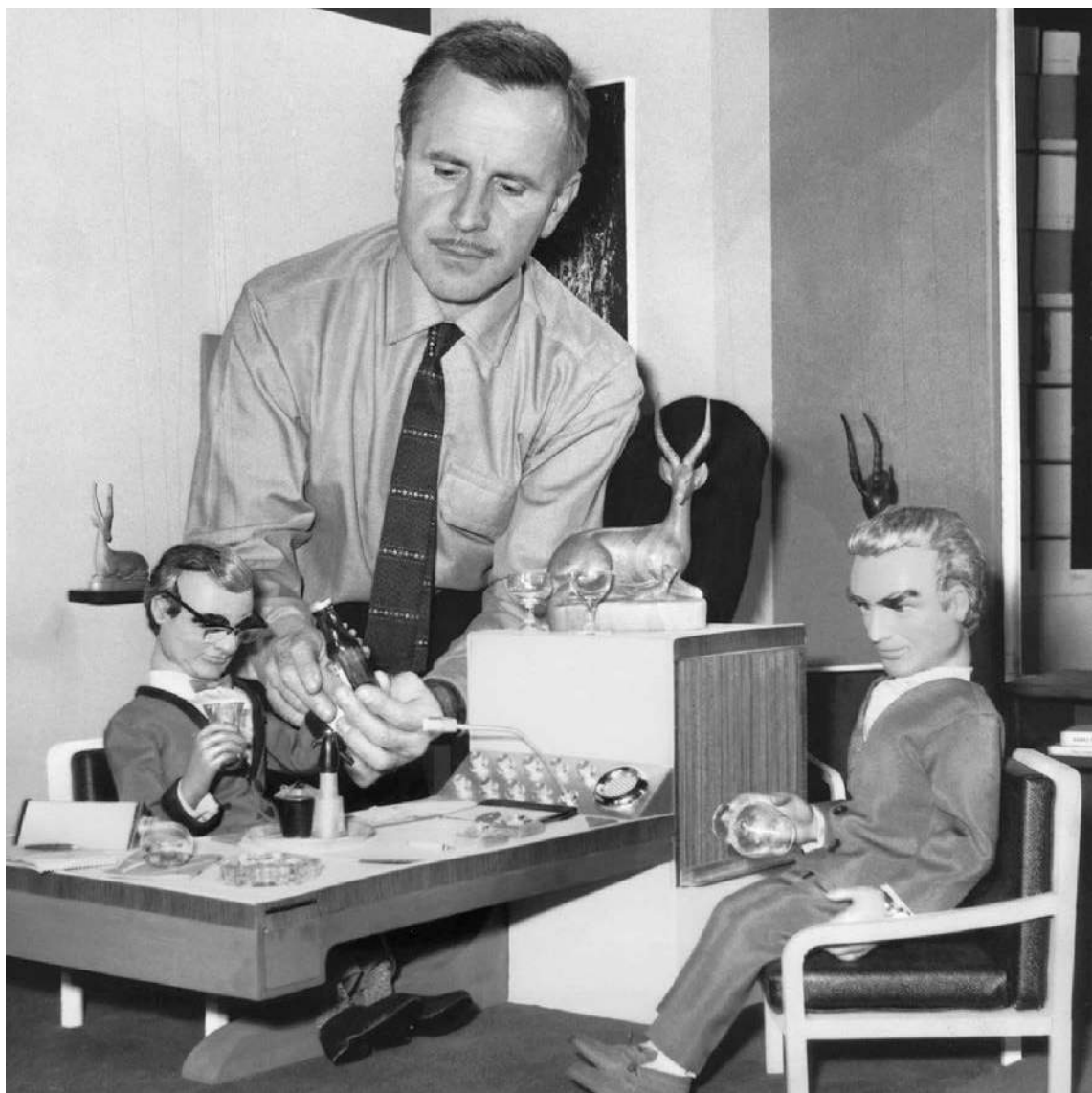
...actually, never mind. Everything's fine. Just ignore me.
~~Theon~~ Reek, the basement.

Dear Reek, no one will respect you if you don't start standing up for yourself. Buck your ideas up.

How to deal with your monster mother/sister-in-law

We all know the in-laws can be nightmares. Most of them can be won over with a bit of kindness and a nice smile. Some of them just want you gone. Here's an example of a woman who simply cannot be won over...

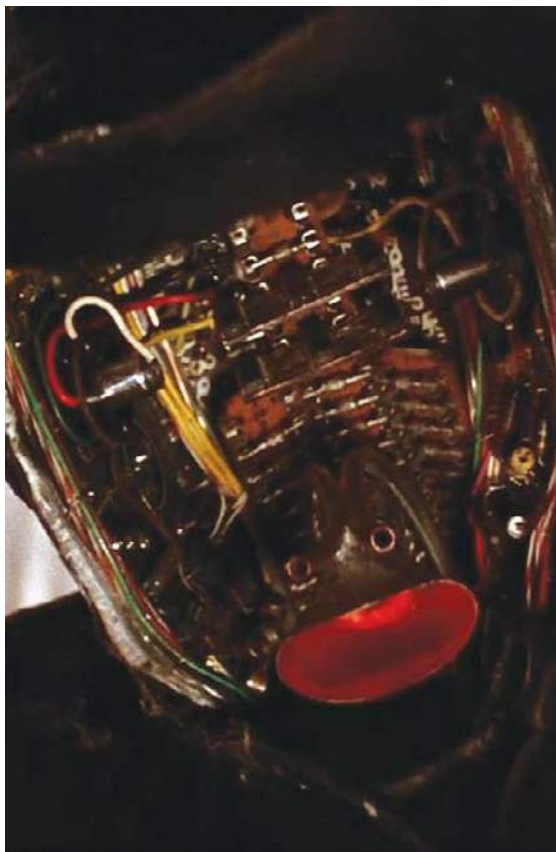




Time Warp

- 142 Battlestar Galactica
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THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

FEW SERIES COMMAND THE CULT FOLLOWING OF BATTLESTAR GALACTICA. THE SERIES FIRST AIRED IN 1978 TO RECORD VIEWING NUMBERS, GOING ON TO BE CANCELLED, REVIVED AND REIMAGINED. SCIFINOW CAUGHT UP WITH CAPTAIN APOLLO HIMSELF, RICHARD HATCH, TO GET AN INSIGHT INTO THE MAKING OF THIS SCI-FI EPIC...

"There are those who believe that life here, began out there. Far across the universe, with tribes of humans who may have been the forefathers of the Egyptians, or the Toltecs, or the Mayans... Some believe that there may yet be brothers of man who even now fight to survive, somewhere beyond the heavens."

1977 was a big year for science fiction. The unprecedented success of *Star Wars* made the genre more bankable than it had ever been, and studios jumped at the chance to take advantage of this appetite for all things sci-fi.

Paramount looked to *Star Trek*, and within two years *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* had revived the franchise. Meanwhile, television writer and producer Glen Larson saw the perfect opportunity to revive an old idea of his, called Adam's Ark. It was influenced in part by Erich von Däniken's *Chariots Of The Gods* (1968), which hypothesised that ancient human civilisations may have been gifted technology by aliens, as well as elements of the Mormon faith.

Somewhere far off in the universe, 12 colonies of humans migrated from the dying world of Kobol and found new planets to populate. For 1,000 years, the colonies have been at war with a mechanical race known as the Cylons, who offer humanity peace only to spring a trap with the help of their power-hungry human liaison, Gaius Baltar (John Colicos).



The colonies are wiped out, as is most of the Colonial Fleet save the Battlestar Galactica under the command of Admiral Adama (Lorne Greene), now leader of a 'rag-tag fugitive fleet' on a quest to find the fabled 13th Colony – Earth. They set a course into deep space with limited resources, fleeing the Cylons and looking for clues to the whereabouts of Earth.

The series was fast-tracked into production, shot at Universal and aired on ABC in September 1978. Lead actor Richard Hatch, who played ace pilot Apollo, says he turned down the role at first.

"I had turned down the audition because I just loved *Star Wars*, and I thought this was maybe going to be a

cheap rip-off. Then 12 months later they couldn't seem to find the Captain Apollo that they wanted, and Glen Larson had seen me in *Whatever Happened To The Class Of '65*, and thought I was perfect.

"So here I am, a starving actor, and he's taking me out to wine and dine me, trying to convince me to be part of the biggest, most expensive production in TV history, which every actor in Hollywood wanted to do. I found myself in what we call the 'magic hour' where they had to make a decision, and they offered me the role. I was surprised – I didn't expect them to hire me."

Production was such a whirlwind that he was given the part on the same day he had to arrive on set. "The minute my agent called me, I had to jump in the car, and within an hour I was on set getting ready to shoot. I've never been so overwhelmed by a production. I had no idea it was this big or important, and I truly was terrified. And my name was at the top – I thought, 'How do I live up to these expectations?' So it was a pretty scary, terrifying day, but I got through it, and after meeting Lorne Greene all was well. Dirk Benedict (Starbuck) and Herb Jefferson Jr (Boomer) and I bonded quickly – and the rest is history."

Captain Apollo and his companions Starbuck and Boomer were Viper pilots – the critical line of defence between the Colonial Fleet and the Cylons. On the bridge, Admiral Adama (Greene) commanded the Galactica with the support of Colonel Tigh (Terry Carter)

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA



and his daughter Athena Adama (Maren Jensen). Athena's rival for Starbuck's affections was medical officer Cassiopeia (Laurette Spang), and Anne Lockhart joined the cast midway through the season as Battlestar Pegasus Viper pilot Sheba.

The pilot was three episodes long, essentially a made-for-TV movie. Larson had wanted to make a miniseries, but ABC pushed for a weekly show, cutting lead time significantly. It was a hectic period, and hype for the new series was massive, according to Hatch.

"It got the largest audience in TV history for a sci-fi show. 65 million people watched the pilot. An aircraft carrier admiral once told me that they brought their ship into port just so that they could pick up the signal to watch it. It was an amazing time."

Every show needs a great villain, and the Cylons were menacing foes. Larson had envisioned them as reptilian, but the network wouldn't allow real creatures to be killed off so frequently in prime time. The Cylons therefore became robots, created by a reptilian civilisation which, so Baltar states, was overwhelmed by its own technology and died out.

Legendary illustrator Ralph McQuarrie designed concept artwork for *Battlestar*, including a first draft of the Cylons' appearance. His vision was a little more akin to a surgical droid from *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980). Artists Andrew Probert and Joe Johnson then created new designs for the mechanical menace, with Johnson incorporating elements of Samurai armour into his, while Probert took inspiration from Greek warriors, including a skirt and a sword.

Probert's look triumphed, including the iconic red eye that oscillated back and forth, coupled with remarkable sound design by Oscar-winning sound editor Peter Berkos. He used a vocoder in tandem with a synthesiser, and a single actor portrayed all the Cylon voices to keep the sound consistent and monotone. Stunt performers, and occasionally football or basketball players, were hired to make the Cylons every inch the imposing threat they were written to be.

Battlestar Galactica didn't just draw on science fiction iconography; it was also inspired by antiquity. The names of the colonies, like Caprica, Piscara and Sagitara, were pulled from the signs of the Zodiac. The Viper pilots' helmets were inspired by Egyptian headdresses, call signs like Athena and Apollo were taken from Greek mythology, and exterior shots set on Kobol were even filmed on location in Giza. The look of the show was distinctive, which Hatch says he holds dear.

"I have a particular love for the design of the original show because it was very unique, iconic and cool. There was something very cool about those jackets, and I loved the Egyptian and Mayan motif that was woven throughout. I love the look of it and the visual aspects of it. John Dykstra was the special effects supervisor on *Star Wars*, and was ours when we started, so he also was able to bring a lot of very powerful visuals and dynamics, which had never been seen before on television."

The back story was also very dark: 12 planets are wiped out, with the few survivors left on the run, and chasing what could be a myth. *Star Wars* might have had a fascist Empire, but *Battlestar Galactica* was about



BATTLESTAR BEHIND THE SCENES

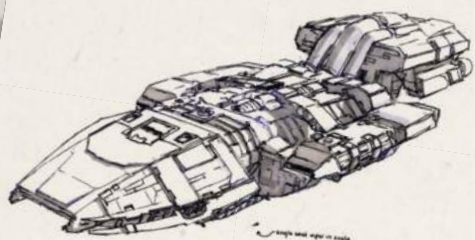
The pictures here represent just a small selection of the hundreds of images in Aurum Press's fully authorised *Battlestar Galactica Vault: The Complete History Of The Series, 1978-2012* by Paul Ruditis.

This lovingly presented guide is a treasure trove for all things *Battlestar*, containing within its pages hundreds of never-before-seen images, and concept art from the iconic Ralph McQuarrie, as well as annotated scripts and storyboards, and even ten pieces of memorabilia for each reader. *Battlestar Galactica Vault* is available now for £20 from Aurum Press.

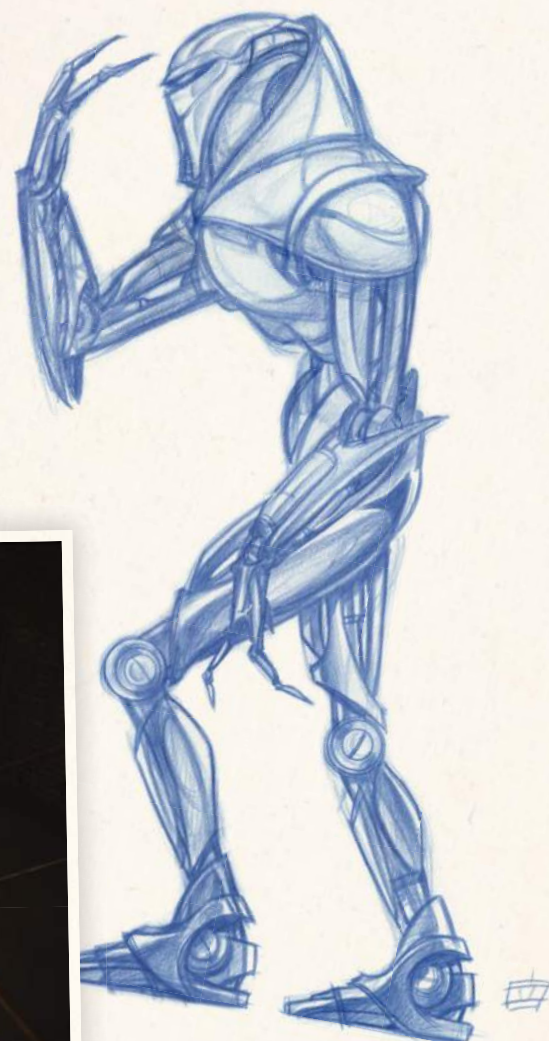
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©NBC



Battlestar Galactica - 1978-2012
GALACTICA #3 Richard C. Langford
Feb 1/2013



"LORNE GREENE SET THE TONE; NOBODY WAS GOING TO PULL RANK"

RICHARD HATCH

the very extinction of humanity. And yet, the show was unbelievably upbeat and hopeful in the face of this predicament – almost jarringly so. Hatch believes that the bonds he and his co-stars formed on set helped set the tone for the series.

"There's a lot of infighting on sets or competition, as actors want more screen time. But on *Battlestar* we formed a family, and I love projects that deal with that. This was about an extended family surviving a holocaust. It was a powerful, dramatic story that showed people pulling together, watching each others' backs and somehow surviving the impossible."

Regular guest voice Patrick Macnee as the charismatic Count Iblis, with Lieutenant Sheba (Anne Lockhart).



Likewise, the cast and crew faced a near-impossible task in bringing the show to life. The 18-month shoot on the backlot of Universal saw the actors filming for almost seven days a week, sometimes for 16-hour days. The man who held them all together was Lorne Greene, the Canadian actor who played patriarch Ben Cartwright in long-running western series *Bonanza*. As his on-screen son, Hatch spent a lot of time with Greene, and appreciated his composure.

"I grew up watching *Bonanza*, so getting to play his son – I mean, wow. Lorne Greene was such a down-to-earth, genuine human being, and he was the most

experienced actor there – he was the captain of the ship. Lorne set the tone; nobody was going to pull rank, nobody was going to play games or manipulate to get more screen time. It was all about us coming together, and he orchestrated that."

Episodes ranged from gunslinging western stories 'The Lost Warrior' and *The Guns Of Navarone*-inspired 'The Gun On Ice Planet Zero' to disaster mini-movie 'Fire In Space' and murder mystery 'Murder On The Rising Star'. Some worked and others didn't, but the stories were ambitious to say the least.

When rival network CBS rearranged its Sunday night line-up, *Battlestar Galactica* found itself up against *All In The Family*, and understandably failed to topple the established sitcom in the ratings. The show's expensive budget spelled trouble, and it ended after 24 episodes with 'The Hand Of God'. Fans were furious, but Hatch says he wasn't entirely surprised.

Cassiopeia (Laurette Spang) keeps a straight face in spite of the costumes.



Unlike its successor, *Battlestar Galactica* wasn't afraid to keep things light-hearted.



TOP TEN THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW



1. Television history

The pilot 'Saga Of A Star World' had the biggest budget of any television show at that time – \$7 million. Subsequent episodes cost around \$750,000 to make.



2. Oh boy...

Donald P. Bellisario, creator of *Quantum Leap*, wrote many episodes of the original *Battlestar Galactica*, including the season finale 'The Hand Of God'.



3. Admiral Serina

Jane Seymour was offered the role of Admiral Helena Cain in Ronald D. Moore's series, but declined. Former *Star Trek* actress Michelle Forbes took on the part instead.



4. Call me Ishmael

While character names like Apollo and Athena were taken from mythology, both Starbuck and Boomer are characters from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*.



5. Little Miss Muffit

Muffit II, the robotic doggie Boxey is given to replace his beloved pet, was actually played by a four-year-old chimpanzee in a suit. Her name was Evolution, or 'Evie' for short.

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA



Fighter pilots Apollo (Richard Hatch) and Starbuck (Dirk Benedict) were the two leads.



The primary adversaries, the Cylons were especially challenging foes.



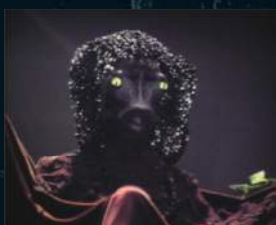
Battlestar Galactica brought space adventure into audience's living rooms, and was darker than a mere *Star Wars* rip-off.

ABOUT BATTLESTAR GALACTICA



6. McQuarrie's concepts

Ralph McQuarrie produced 24 paintings to illustrate *Battlestar Galactica*'s pilot. His poster was heavily inspired John Solie's work once the actors had been cast.



7. You rang?

The Addams Family's Lurch, Ted Cassidy, first provided the voice for the Cylon Imperious Leader in the TV movie pilot. He can be heard on the early trailer, but was ultimately replaced by Patrick Macnee.



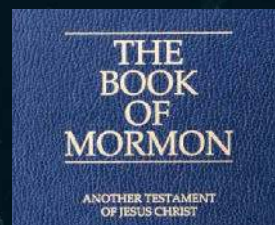
8. By your command

The Cylons were first written as blind creatures rather than robots, so designer Andrew Probert's concept for their helmets included a scanner – the now-iconic red eye.



9. Studio wars

20th Century Fox sued Universal for copyright infringement. The studio claimed they'd stolen ideas from *Star Wars*, prompting a countersuit that *Star Wars* had stolen from *Silent Running*.



10. Book of Mormon

Battlestar Galactica draws on some elements of the Mormon faith, including lost tribes and the Quorum of the Twelve ruling council.

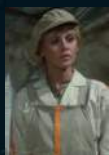
GUEST STARRING

Our favourite guests



Patrick Macnee Imperious Leader/ Count Iblis

Macnee is scattered throughout *Battlestar Galactica*. His enigmatic narration about the origins of life kick-off each episode, and he voiced the Cylons' Imperious Leader. In 'War Of The Gods', the actor appears in the flesh as the charismatic Count Iblis, a man with telekinetic and telepathic powers who charms the crew and delivers Gaius Baltar to them. The over-the-top dialogue and Macnee's absolute sincerity are charming, even if it does go a bit too far with its whole angels and demons theme.



Britt Ekland Tenna

Britt Ekland on *Battlestar Galactica*? It happened. The *Wicker Man* actress appears as one of three identical clones in 'The Gun On Ice Planet Zero,' where Apollo and a team of criminals try to take out a lethal cannon the *Galactica* must pass in range of. Obviously, ladies' man Starbuck develops a thing for her, and it's impossible not to roll your eyes at his sadness at leaving three versions of her behind.



Lloyd Bridges Commander Cain

While perhaps better known for comedic turns in parody films *Airplane!* and *Hot Shots!*, Lloyd Bridges could do heroic, boy howdy. He guest stars in one of the strongest two-part episodes of the season, 'The Living Legend', which tells you everything you need to know about the gutsy Commander's character. He's reckless and unpredictable, but he gets results, and Bridges perfectly encapsulates the role of daring military leader, chasing victory no matter the cost.



Fred Astaire Chameleon

Another surprising guest actor, Hollywood legend Fred Astaire asked for a role as his grandchildren liked the series. In 'The Man With Nine Lives' he plays an ageing con-man called Chameleon who claims to be Starbuck's father. The orphaned pilot is instantly taken with his new 'dad', but Apollo suspects he's not telling the whole truth. It was the last time Astaire danced on screen.



Brock Peters Chief Opposer Solon

Another great character actor, known to *Star Trek* fans as Fleet Admiral Cartwright and Benjamin Sisko's father Joseph. Peters made an appearance as the lawyer for the prosecution in 'Murder On The Rising Star', in which Starbuck lands himself on trial for the murder of a rival Triad player. Not a huge role, but his gravitas makes it noteworthy.

"We were taking almost 10-12 days per episode where a normal show takes seven, so it was a very challenging production. I think part of why *Battlestar* didn't continue at that time was because the budget was so huge and it took so long to film. They were trying to make a movie each week. Technology was not at that point yet, but it was a very heroic year, and other channels did their best to bring us down. Nevertheless, we were probably the highest-rated science fiction show of all time in terms of numbers and what we accomplished.

"In those days sci-fi wasn't as accepted as it is now, and they weren't used to dealing with those kinds of volatile budgets that a space show sometimes brings. Today, the industry recognises that sci-fi is one of those rare genres that seems to build an audience over time instead of diminishing. *Star Trek* became a big hit in syndication, and *Battlestar* has increased its fanbase every year from generation to generation."

ABC quickly approached Glen Larson to revive the show, and so *Galactica 1980* was born. Adama and Boomer were the only original characters to return, however, and the series tanked after just ten episodes, failing to capture the excitement of its first season. In the Nineties, Hatch tried to revive the series himself, even creating an action-packed trailer called 'The Second Coming', featuring original cast members John Colicos and George Murdock (Dr Salik).

"I'd been pitching to [Universal] about a new series, but they were a little confused about how that might

look. So at a time when nobody was doing trailers – because if you made a trailer it's because you already had a movie – I went out and put one together. We played it at Comic-Con and got an eight-minute standing ovation. We got a call from Harvey Weinstein at Miramax thinking that if we had the trailer, we must have the movie. It helped reinvigorate the fanbase.

"Bryan Singer and Tom DeSanto at one point got a deal to do it, but that got dropped when they had to go work on *X2*. And then ultimately Ron Moore got involved and made the reimagined series with that wonderful cast. I invited him, Glen, Tom and Bryan to a convention up at Universal to talk to the fans about what they wanted to do. We had this big room where Ron played the new series trailer, and it was so different from the original that the audience was incredibly cold at that moment."

Very few shows enjoy a second chance, but *Battlestar Galactica* returned as a miniseries in 2003, and was picked up as a full series in 2004, running for four seasons to critical acclaim. Characters like Apollo and Boomer were back, but with a twist, the most notable being Katee Sackhoff's role as Starbuck, reimagined as a woman.

The new series had an even more diverse cast and took that dark back story to a grittier place than the original show could for its time slot and era. Hatch was invited to join as guest star Tom Zarek – a role about a million miles away from the clean-cut *Viper* pilot he first played back in 1978.

John Colicos as Baltar, who betrayed humanity to the Cylons.



Starbuck wows a Cylon Centurion with his luxurious locks.



"IT WAS A VERY CHALLENGING PRODUCTION... THEY WERE TRYING TO MAKE A MOVIE EACH WEEK"

RICHARD HATCH

"Even though it was very different, there was a vision. Here was somebody that knew what they were doing and had a really clear vision of where he wanted to take it, and I was really impressed. I got to know Ron, and he said to me, 'The series has been picked up, and I have one-time spot here, but it could turn into an ongoing part, and it's the role of Tom Zarek – a political revolutionary.'

"I couldn't believe they were actually inviting me to come on the show, but I loved the role. Every step created the next miracle. That convention, getting to know Ron, him taking a chance on me and letting me come in and play one of my favourite roles of all time. Zarek is an enigmatic and complex character – most of the characters in the new series were never black and white; they were morally conflicted characters, which is what made that show get the critical acclaim it did."

Despite the cheesy dialogue and feathered hair, *Battlestar Galactica* was a show about survival, family and hope. For a series with so few episodes, it has

Andrew Probert's distinctive Cylon Centurion design remains iconic, especially its menacing red eye.

seeped into pop culture so completely that the mere mention of 'Cylon' invokes memories of that voice dispassionately saying 'By your command', as well as the iconic designs of the uniforms and ships.

"The original show wasn't as dark or political or edgy" says Hatch. "It was more about family, and it was a show that the whole family could sit down and watch together. This was humanity going through the most intense, challenging, life-and-death circumstances, and to this day they're discovering it and falling in love with it. I feel very blessed, because you can be in a lot of shows that are forgettable. They're entertaining at the time, but you forget them, but for whatever reason, *Battlestar's* heart and energy touched people deeply.

"There's never been a one-year series that's made that kind of powerful impression or lasting impact. We're all fans of something, and when you're a fan you just want more of it. It's amazing when people come up to us and tell us their stories about what the show meant to them, and how it helped them get through challenging times in their lives. How often do you get the chance to be part of something like that?"



BATTLEFIELD GALACTICA

Where it all went wrong for *Galactica* 1980

If you know your television tropes, you'll know of the Cousin Oliver phenomenon. When *The Brady Bunch* introduced a young cousin in the fifth season to attract younger viewers the show was soon cancelled.

Cousin Oliver is in *Galactica* 1980. Okay, so it's actually Robbie Rist, the actor who played him, but the jinx remains. Mere weeks after *Battlestar Galactica* was cancelled by ABC, fierce letter-writing campaigns protesting against the decision gathered pace, so they contacted Larson to revive the show.

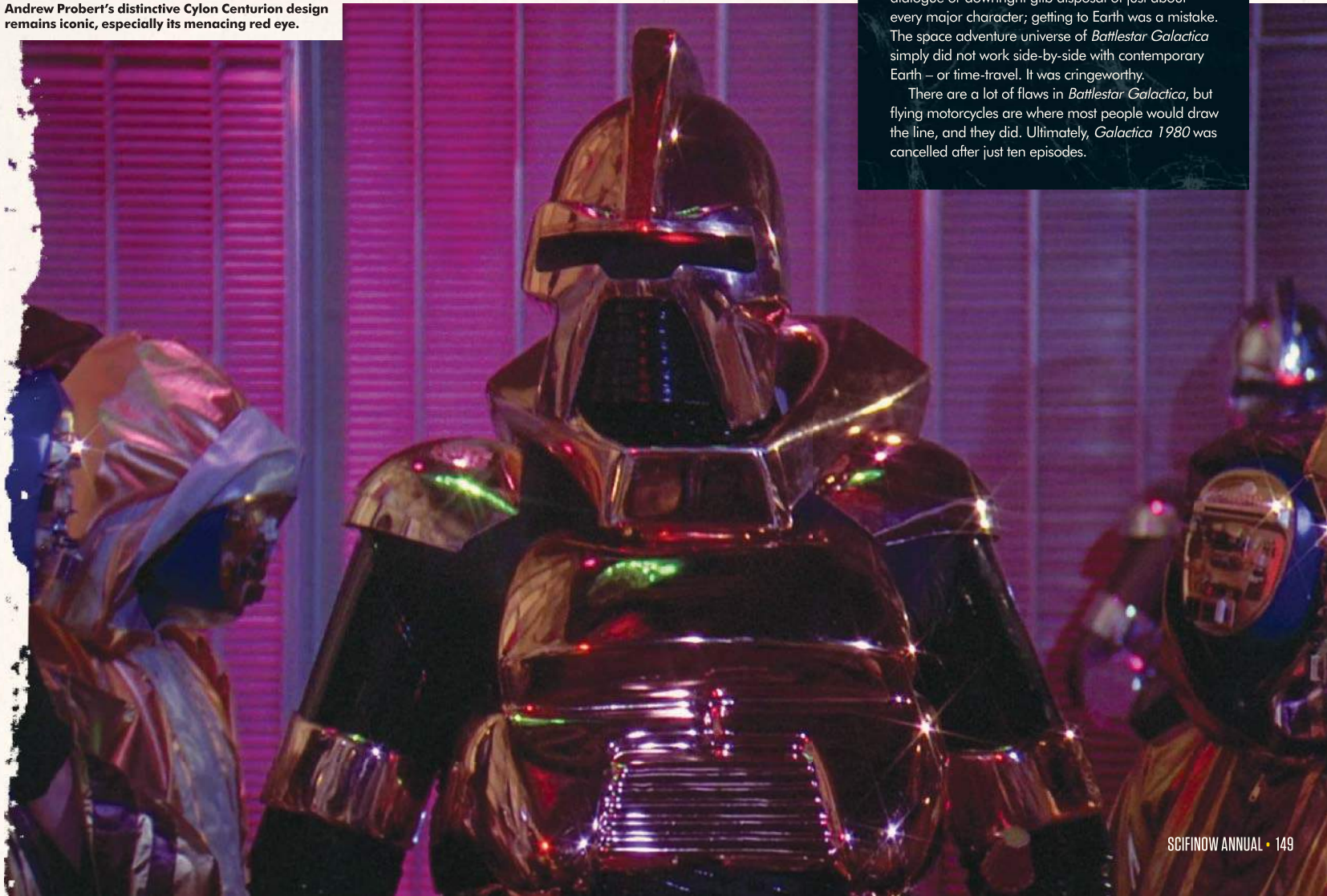
The idea was to do a spin-off, reunite the cast and get the *Galactica* crew to Earth. However, with Dirk Benedict and Richard Hatch unavailable the story was set 30 years on from the first series' finale, thus explaining away the missing cast members.

Galactica reaches Earth, but realises all too late that the planet isn't advanced enough to defend itself from the Cylon forces. Creepy child prodigy Doctor Zee (Rist) says they must bring Earth to a level of technology that can help the fight against the Cylons.

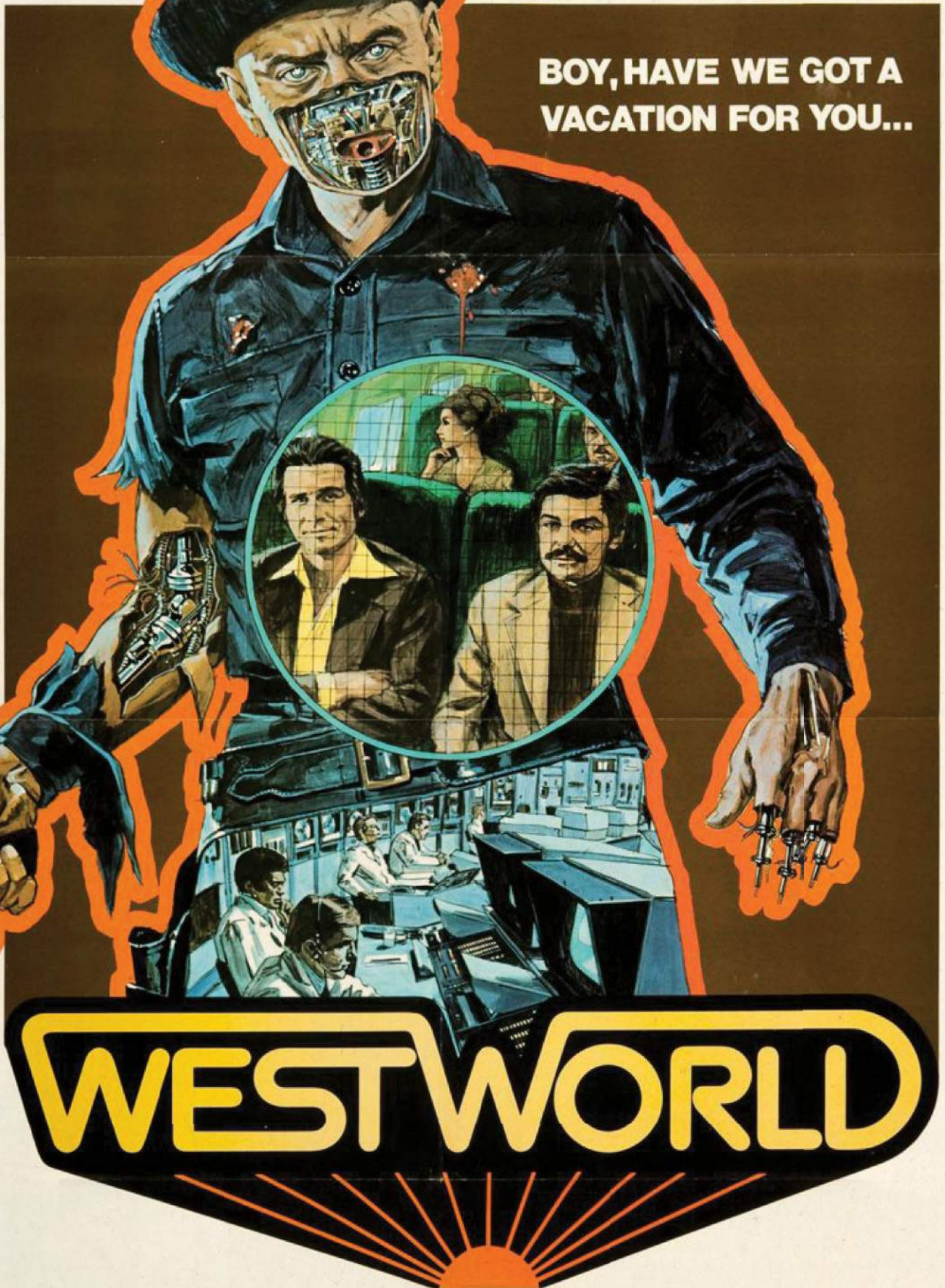
Apollo and Starbuck replacements Troy (Kent McCord) and Dillon (Barry van Dyke) are sent to the US to share technology, and Commander Xavier (Richard Lynch) argues for the use of time travel to kick-start a technological revolution.

The problem isn't just the confused logic, clunky dialogue or downright glib disposal of just about every major character; getting to Earth was a mistake. The space adventure universe of *Battlestar Galactica* simply did not work side-by-side with contemporary Earth – or time-travel. It was cringeworthy.

There are a lot of flaws in *Battlestar Galactica*, but flying motorcycles are where most people would draw the line, and they did. Ultimately, *Galactica* 1980 was cancelled after just ten episodes.



**BOY, HAVE WE GOT A
VACATION FOR YOU...**



FLASHBACK

WESTWORLD

WITH THE NEW HBO SERIES ON THE HORIZON, WE TAKE A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT BOTH MICHAEL CRICHTON'S ORIGINAL WESTWORLD AND THE SUBSEQUENT SHORT-LIVED 1980 TV SERIES, AND PROBE LEAD ACTORS RICHARD BENJAMIN AND JIM MCMULLAN RESPECTIVELY ABOUT THEIR MEMORIES

"I tried writing *Westworld* as a novel, and it didn't work. In some ways it's really a movie. Most of the fantasies about the Wild West or about medieval Europe or about Imperial Rome are movie fantasies. They're not what people got from reading history books; they are what they got from looking at Douglas Fairbanks and John Wayne... so in some strange way it doesn't work on paper at all, it only works as images." So said the late best-selling science fiction author-turned feature filmmaker Michael Crichton on the set of his 1973 directorial debut, *Westworld*.

Indeed, the concept of an amusement park catering for the mega-rich, where consumers can literally live out their fantasies guilt-free by interacting as they please with humanoid robots in simulated environments, lends itself seamlessly to the silver screen. Richard Benjamin and James Brolin play the lead city slickers (named Peter Marin and John Blane respectively) that visit the futuristic resort Delos for escapist fun and select 'Western World' as their ideal themed environment.

"Just like my character in the film, I got to do all the things that I dreamed of as a boy while making the movie," reveals actor Richard Benjamin. "Shoot guns, draw against Yul Brynner's gunslinger, ride fast horses... everything most kids think about when they're ten years old. It was every boy's fantasy come true!"

Interestingly, Crichton, who died in 2008, thought the prospect of such a fantasy theme park wasn't as outlandish a science fiction concept as many would believe. The alleged inspiration for the film came from a trip to Disneyland, where he was impressed by the animatronics of the *Pirates Of The Caribbean* ride. "I don't think the premise is far-fetched at all," spoke the director in 1973. "In fact, whether or not anybody will actually build a resort like *Westworld* and exactly the robots and stuff is [less] a question of technology. The technology is essentially there."

The protagonists in *Westworld* eventually come up against Brynner's mysterious Gunslinger, which Martin easily defeats during three provoked shootouts (the

robot is returned to labs each evening for repair). But despite being installed with Isaac Asimov's renowned Three Laws of Robotics – ie, 'A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm' – the android eventually takes offence at being constantly defeated and decides to retaliate, with deadly consequences.

"Something goes wrong, because the programming is so sophisticated that he finally cannot stand to be constantly shot at, so he starts killing!" commented the late Brynner. "He starts repeating what his enemy did, then he starts smiling. The more he starts killing, the more he starts feeling warm, and the more he becomes more of a human being."

Crichton modeled the Gunslinger character on Brynner's iconic portrayal of Chris Larabee Adams in John Sturges classic *The Magnificent Seven*, right down to his identical black-hatted attire. "I've really got the classical westerner played by a highly developed

"I GOT TO SHOOT GUNS, DRAW AGAINST THE GUNSLINGER, RIDE FAST HORSES..."

RICHARD BENJAMIN



Westworld has spawned numerous copycats and spoofs since its release.

machine," observed Brynner. "Therefore the reactions may not necessarily be human."

During interviews to promote *Terminator Genisys*, Arnold Schwarzenegger admitted that he had based his 1984 antagonistic portrayal of The Terminator on Brynner's carefully nuanced robotic performance. Ironically, in somewhat of an overt casting decision, back in 2002 Schwarzenegger was up for Brynner's role during development for a *Westworld* TV series. Now, that enigmatic role will be embodied by Ed Harris, who has been pegged as the ominous 'Man in Black' in writer/producer Jonathan Nolan's forthcoming series for HBO.



Leading up to the malfunctioning Gunslinger in Crichton's *Westworld*, Delos had experienced an increasing number of breakdowns throughout the park. The scientists describe the occurrences as spreading like an infectious disease among the androids. The complexity of the problem is deepened further when it is revealed that computers were involved in configuring some of these sophisticated automations. The problems commence when a robotic rattlesnake injures Blane, then escalate further when another robot goes against its programming in Medieval World by refusing the sexual advances of a guest. Events ultimately turn deadly when a Black Knight android kills another tourist during a swordfight.

Crichton would go on to pen the premise of another infamous theme park that malfunctions and turns on its participants with deadly consequences. In retrospect, *Westworld* can be seen as the template for Crichton's *Jurassic Park*, and perhaps even more directly Colin Trevorrow's *Jurassic World*, where John Hammond's ambitious dream of a fully functional theme park, where guests can 'interact' with genetically engineered dinosaurs, is finally realised.

Benjamin remembers working with the late intellectual filmmaker. "This was Michael's first film. Since he was a master storyteller, he knew what to do. He was totally prepared. He knew exactly what he



"BEING WITH MICHAEL WAS LIKE BEING WITH THE SMARTEST GUY IN THE ROOM"

RICHARD BENJAMIN

wanted in every frame," he recalls. "Being with Michael was like being with the smartest guy in the room. The nice thing was he made you feel smart too!"

Somewhat prefiguring *The Terminator*, *Westworld* climaxes with a chilling man-versus-machine showdown between Brynner's murderous, vengeful Gunslinger and Benjamin's sole surviving panic-stricken tourist. What's perhaps most disturbing about this sequence is the hopeless desperation of the situation – whereby Brynner's seemingly undefeatable automaton relentlessly pursues Benjamin's defenseless Martin around the deserted environments of the now creepily uninhabited park, with eerily pixelated shots taken from the android's point of view. Despite the murderous intent of the proceedings, Benjamin has fond memories of filming this now iconic finale, particularly with regards to securing a friendship with his legendary co-star.

"One of the neat things about this sequence is that it was just me and Yul," recalls Benjamin fondly. "Yul loved making movies. He was a lesson in professionalism on the set. He imbued in me how fortunate we were to get to make movies, that it was the best job in the world. Not only was I lucky to get to play opposite Yul, the fine actor he was, but perhaps more importantly we remained friends for many years."

Becoming one of MGM's biggest box office hits of 1973, *Westworld* was warmly received by audiences and critics alike. Over 40 years later, it remains particularly praiseworthy given its postmodern critique, whereby it depicts an audience who could finally cross over into the movie world and participate – living out their violent and sexual fantasies – until the tables are turned against them.

"You never can tell how any film will do, but we all thought we were doing something unusual and original at the time," continues Benjamin. "However, I don't think any of us could have predicted it would become the iconic film that it has." Despite the widespread acclaim,

Crichton was less than satisfied with the response to certain scenes, claiming the audience "laughed in the wrong places" and criticising some moments of apparently misplaced tension.

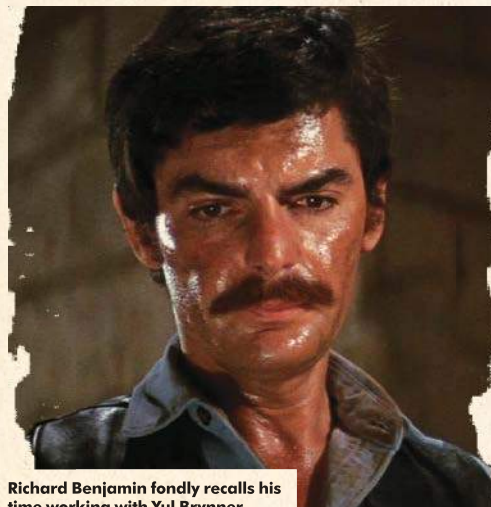


Three years later, a sequel reopened the park as *Futureworld*, featuring Peter Fonda and Blythe Danner as reporters who go in search of an apparent cover-up by Delos, where the robots have turned murderous again. TV director Richard T. Heffron replaced Crichton, while Brynner made a cameo in what was sadly to become one of his final film appearances. *Futureworld* was largely considered an inferior retread of *Westworld*, but isn't completely devoid of interest, and is noteworthy for its early use of CGI effects.

More promisingly, in 1980, the green light was given to a new TV series continuation called *Beyond Westworld*, which featured Jim McMullan as its protagonist John Moore – the security chief of the Delos Corporation. McMullan reveals that it was *Westworld's* original creator who helped him land the lead part.

"Michael Crichton was a friend of mine who had this idea for a movie which didn't come into fruition... then he remembered me for *Beyond Westworld*," he explains. "Because of *Westworld* they asked him who might be right for the part of John Moore. He suggested me so that was quite an exciting time."

The pilot revolved around the sinister intentions of the evil scientist of an android engineering company (played by James Wainwright) to use the failed *Westworld* automations for global domination. "The pilot we did was very good, and it explained what happened after *Westworld* was destroyed and how the creator decided to use his robots for his dastardly deeds. It was my job to hunt these robots down as the white-suited hero, and it was a lot of fun!"



Richard Benjamin fondly recalls his time working with Yul Brynner.

Unfortunately, while the opening episode proved a roaring success (and ended up being Emmy-nominated for its achievements in makeup and art direction), audience numbers subsequently began to dwindle, and just five episodes were made, with only three of them eventually broadcast.

"I was certain the show would go on for years. However, my part and the scripts kind of got worse and worse," laments McMullan. "The problem was that they had a green light to go with it very quickly, and they didn't take time to develop it. The technology was good, but the stories started to get less interesting... they needed to get some interesting and unusual stories."

"It could have been wonderful if they'd taken the time. We were struggling with the storylines back then, and it was disappointing for me. Today, the writing [on television] is brilliant, and that makes the difference. But I had a good time doing it, and I enjoyed the part of running around chasing robots!"



Brynner's Gunslinger can be seen as a prefiguration of the *Terminator* franchise.



The film famously offered a number of themed areas in which guests can 'enjoy' themselves.

As the film progresses, the more unsettlingly lifelike the robots become.



Talk turns to the forthcoming eagerly anticipated HBO *Westworld* series, which features an ensemble cast that includes Anthony Hopkins, James Marsden, Jeffrey Wright and the aforementioned Ed Harris. "I'm semi-retired now, but I wrote to Jonathan Nolan to tell him I was in *Beyond Westworld*, and that maybe he could fit me in," reveals McMullan. "I don't mind doing a guest part or something – it'll just be fun to do it to get back into that world again."

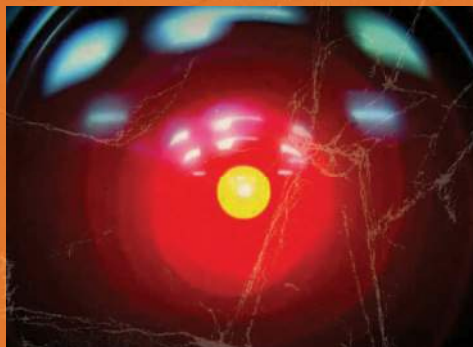
Creator Nolan has also directed the pilot episode of the new series, which is said to be 'a dark odyssey about the dawn of artificial consciousness and the future of sin.' "Judging from Jonathan Nolan and the way he does things, it'll probably be a knockout series," continues McMullan. "I only wish he'd done *Beyond Westworld*, as I know the writing would have been great." 🐘



Westworld is available to buy on Blu-ray now.

HOSTILE INTELLIGENCE

HERE'S AN ASSEMBLAGE OF SOME OF THE MOST FEARSOME ROBOTICS TO HAVE POSED A THREAT TO HUMANITY ON SCREEN



1. HAL

2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)

One of cinema's most celebrated killer computers, HAL is all the more unsettling for its monotone vocals, which retain that unmistakable emotionless dialect whether piloting the Discovery One, attempting to murder its astronauts or hopelessly bargaining its way out of being disconnected.



2. Proteus IV

Demon Seed (1977)

Robert Vaughan leads his smooth, distinctive vocals to this organic household super-computer, who gets a little too close for comfort when he incarcerates and then tries to impregnate Julie Christie in this chilling science fiction cult classic.



3. Ash Alien (1979)

Who would have thought the diminutive science officer Ash (Ian Holm) of the *Nostromo* was a calculating, murderous robot? His attempt to kill Ripley with a rolled-up magazine remains deeply unsettling, and his concluding lines enhances the eerie enduring sense of hopelessness posed by the threat.



4. Android Vera Superman III (1983)

Any child from the Eighties must have been disturbed by the terrifying climatic spikey-haired android transformation of Ross Webster's already venomous sister Vera (Annie Ross). Although quickly defeated, she was, for a brief time, a worthy and chilling antagonistic threat for the man in blue.



5. T-800 Model 101 The Terminator (1984)

Once the living tissue of Arnie's T-800 has peeled away, the metal endoskeleton, the lethal automation beneath is revealed. It's hard not to see the similarities between this android and *Westworld*'s equally deadly Gunslinger automation.



6. Cain RoboCop 2 (1990)

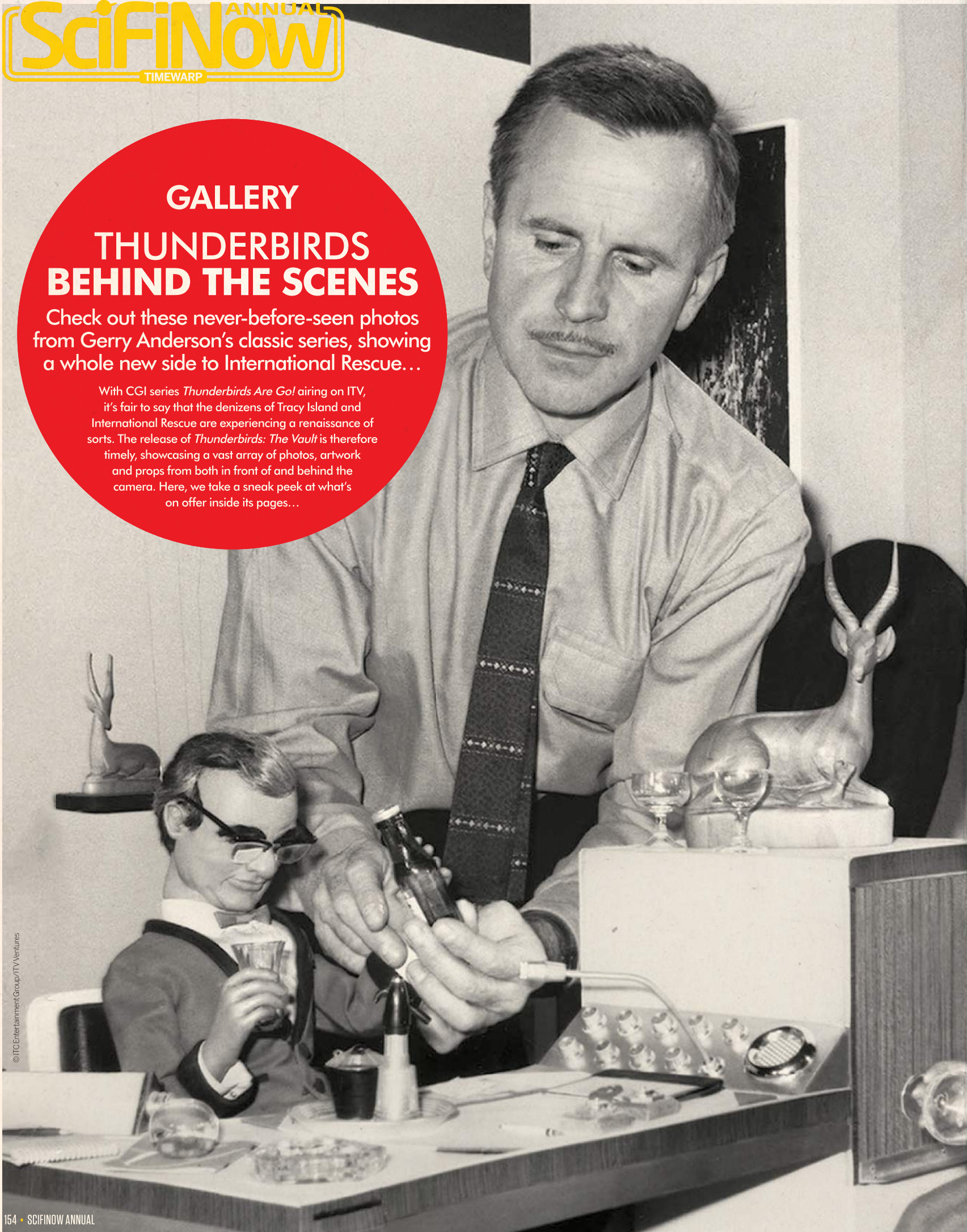
Whatever you may think of Irvin Kershner's sequel, you can't fault the effectiveness posed by the prominent threat of chief antagonist Cain (Tom Noonan) – who transforms into a postmortem adversary when his brain is placed in a robotic shell and he's supped up on designer drug 'Nuke'.

GALLERY

THUNDERBIRDS BEHIND THE SCENES

Check out these never-before-seen photos from Gerry Anderson's classic series, showing a whole new side to International Rescue...

With CGI series *Thunderbirds Are Go!* airing on ITV, it's fair to say that the denizens of Tracy Island and International Rescue are experiencing a renaissance of sorts. The release of *Thunderbirds: The Vault* is therefore timely, showcasing a vast array of photos, artwork and props from both in front of and behind the camera. Here, we take a sneak peek at what's on offer inside its pages...





WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

The *Thunderbirds* prop store at Stirling Road, Slough. The spiritual home of the series, production here was divided between the puppet and special effects stages.



THUNDERBIRDS

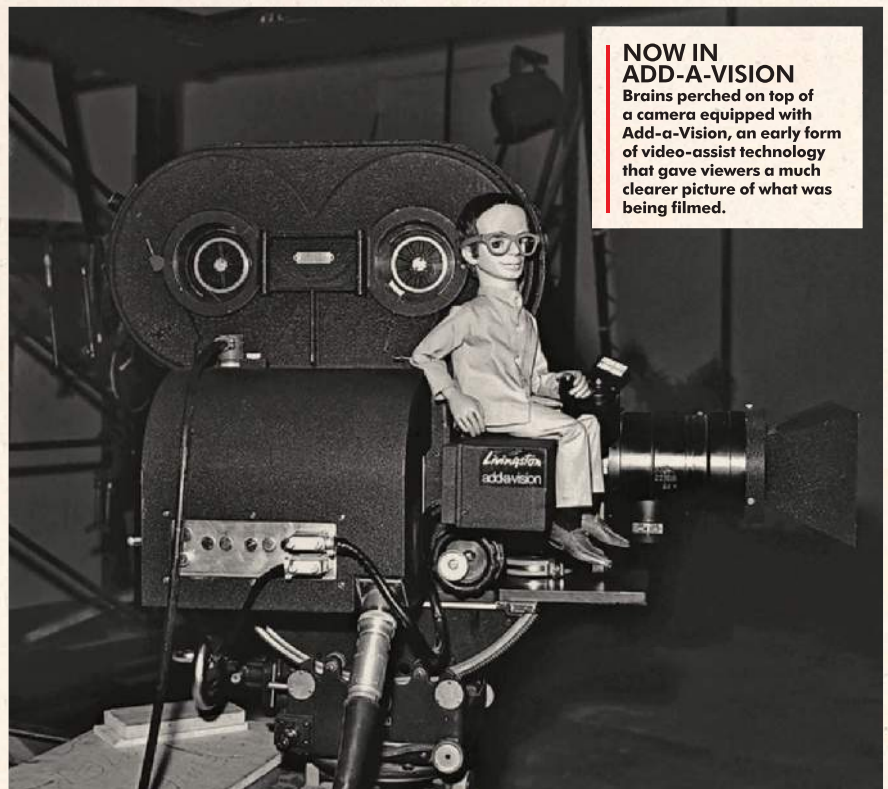
MAKING A MOVIE

Model-maker Mike Trim puts the finishing touches to the Tracy Island Round House for the 1966 movie *Thunderbirds Are Go*. In the background are Character Merchandise Specification Sheet extracts.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Supervising art director Bob Bell makes some adjustments to Gazelle Automations Inc head Wilbur Dandridge III's office on the set of 'The Duchess Assignment'.



NOW IN ADD-A-VISION

Brains perched on top of a camera equipped with Add-a-Vision, an early form of video-assist technology that gave viewers a much clearer picture of what was being filmed.

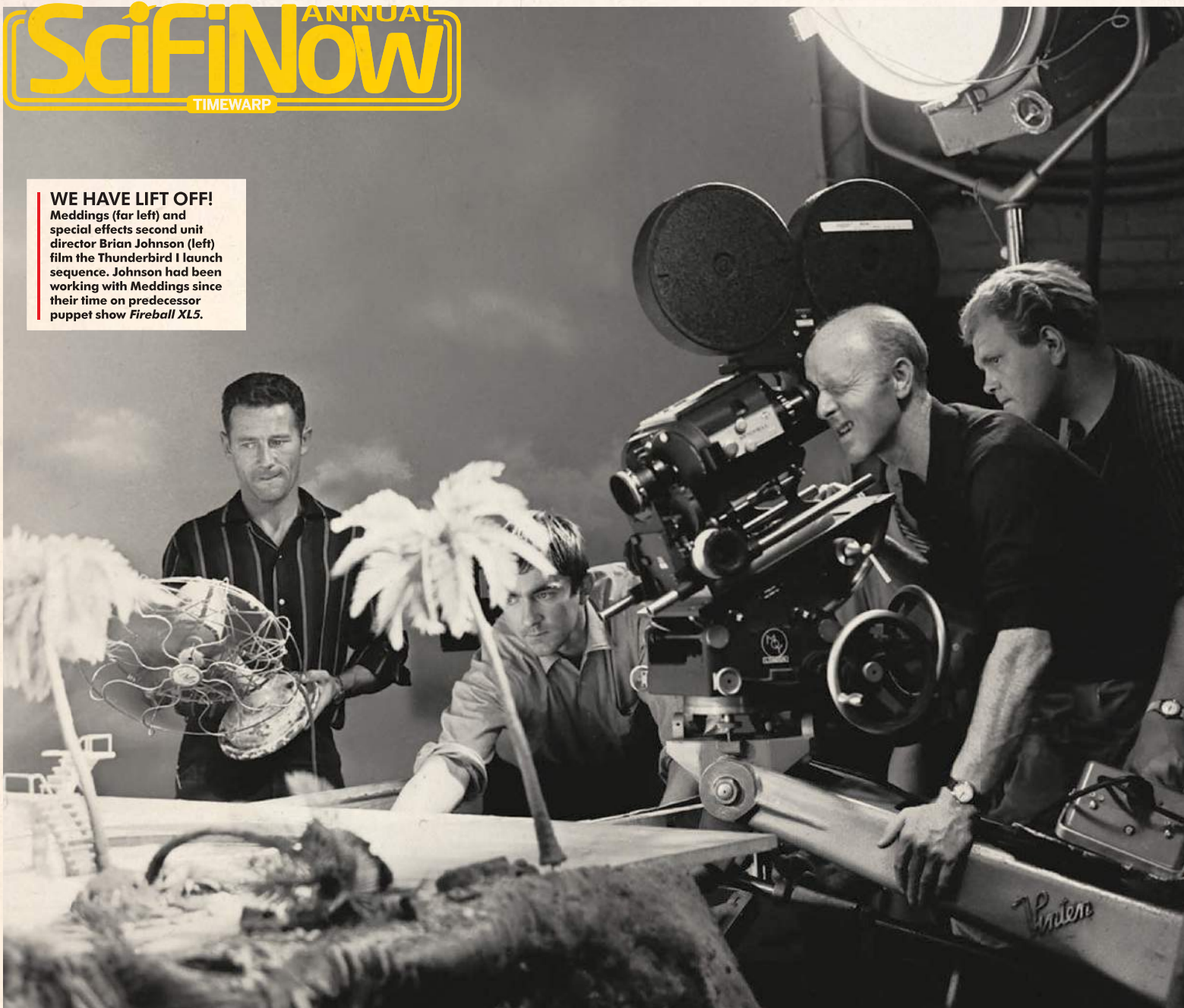


PREPARING THE PILOT

Supervising special effects designer Derek Meddings with the Fireflash airliner he designed for the first episode, 'Trapped In The Sky'. Of his team, he said: "They put their hearts and souls into it..."

WE HAVE LIFT OFF!

Meddings (far left) and special effects second unit director Brian Johnson (left) film the Thunderbird I launch sequence. Johnson had been working with Meddings since their time on predecessor puppet show *Fireball XL5*.



FIRESTARTERS

The filming of a scene from 'Atlantic Inferno', the first episode of Series Two, in which pockets of exploding undersea gas destroy the Seascope drilling rig.

SPACE INVADERS

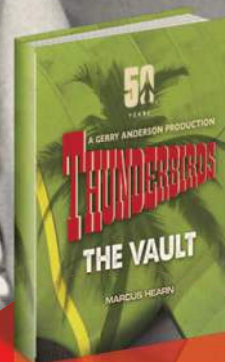
Special effects technician Ian Wingrove (far left) and lighting cameraman Harry Oakes (centre) prepare a scene for the episode 'Martian Invasion', with floor technician Peter Wragg hanging Thunderbird I from above.





LIFE IMITATING FICTION

Gerry and Sylvia Anderson on set during the filming of Thunderbirds episode 'Move - And You're Dead'. The dress Sylvia is wearing is based on a previous Lady Penelope outfit designed by French artist Piet Mondrian.



Containing hundreds of previously unrevealed photos, sketches and artwork, **Thunderbirds: The Vault** is a must-have treasure trove for fans who want to know more about IR. It will be available to buy from 10 September, published by Virgin Books.

**"IT'S NOT A
FRIENDLY
WORLD FOR
SMOKERS...
YOU CAN
STILL DRINK
COFFEE!"
DAVID LYNCH**

DAVID LYNCH

EARLIER THIS YEAR, FILMMAKER, ARTIST AND COFFEE ENTHUSIAST DAVID LYNCH JOURNEYED TO AUSTRALIA TO PROMOTE A SPECIAL EXHIBIT AT THE GALLERY OF MODERN ART. WE SPOKE TO HIM, AND HIS RESPONSES PROVED AS IDIOSYNCRATICALLY AMBIGUOUS AS WE'VE COME TO EXPECT...

How does dreaming affect your work? Are you sharing your dreams with us?

I haven't really gotten many ideas from dreaming – well, not nighttime dreaming. But I love daytime dreaming. I love to sit in a chair and dream about things and go on a daydream, and sometimes ideas come when I do that. I always say I love the idea of dream logic – how dreams can go and how, even though they are very abstract, you can understand them. So this dream logic is something I really like to think about.

Where did the idea for *Between Two Worlds* come about?

One day I was riding in a car during the shooting of the original pilot of *Twin Peaks*, and these ideas started coming, and that was: 'Through the darkness of future's past, the magician longs to see. One chants out between two worlds... Fire... walk with me.'

And this came along, this thing, and it had a lot to do with *Twin Peaks*, but you could say we live in a world of opposites, and there is that field within that's oneness and unity, and from that oneness comes all duality, all the different things, and so it's... another phrase that I like is 'knowledge and experience through combined opposites'. That knowledge and experience is finding this unity that is the real reality, and so I guess this dualness and oneness right in the middle.

What can you reveal about the process of restarting the *Twin Peaks* series?

I think it was in Du-par's Restaurant on Venture Boulevard where I had lunch with [co-creator] Mark Frost, which is when the first *Twin Peaks* started. We started talking, then it got sort of born out of that. This new series started at a place called Musso & Frank – the oldest restaurant in Hollywood – we had lunch and we started talking about some ideas. That was about four years ago, so we've been working on those ideas.

I know it's some time off, but can you give us a glimmer of what to expect from the new series of *Twin Peaks*, and will Gordon Cole (who Lynch played in the original series) return?

Gee, I can't tell you much about the series, urm... [elongated silence].

Can you tell us a bit about working with composer Angelo Badalamenti and coming up with the Laura Palmer theme?

Angelo can write some of the most beautiful, beautiful music, but he's also fairly lazy. I like to think he can write music every day, but he doesn't do that, so he needs some pushing! When we work together, I sit next to him on the piano bench, and I talk to him in words to conjure a mood in him, and he plays my words. If I don't like what he's playing, I change the words and it just goes along like that, and then he'll catch something.

This one day... he had this office, and it was a small apartment, drab and depressing, and there was just a keyboard and the cheapest cassette recorder – I'd sit there talking to him, and he caught something and started playing. I started falling in love immediately, but I didn't know where it was going to go, so I couldn't fall out, and I didn't fall out, and it kept going more and more deeper, and this thing just flew out of Angelo – it was amazing! It was so beautiful, and I started crying, it was so beautiful! Angelo didn't think it was that special – I said "Angelo, it is special!" and later he kind of agreed.

How do you go about tapping into your own creative mindset?

Restrictions are horrible things, just horrible things, and we've got so many restrictions in this world these days. There are rules about everything. I'm not promoting smoking, but I've been smoking since I was five years old, and it's not a friendly world for smokers anymore – luckily, you can still drink coffee! [laughs]

I like traffic laws because people don't get killed, but I believe in freedoms and this field within (linked to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation technique, which Lynch has been practicing for over 40 years) gives a person a great fantastic sense of freedom, and gives you the power to fulfill your desires and get a great life. So if you can get this technique it'll be very good. All the answers are within.

In terms of the worlds that you create, what are you particularly inspired by?

I love smoke and fire and machines, and these factory buildings make me dream. I love oil and pregnated earth – I don't know why, but I love it. So many things that I love are not necessarily good for the environment, but they're beautiful in another way. Nowadays, the factories are little, they are very efficient, and all the machines are tiny and they don't make the same sort of sounds. I'm sure they're more powerful, but they don't appear to be have any power, so it's a little bit depressing for me. I don't know what will come of it, but I do get a lot of inspiration from people's behaviour and the absurdity with the problems we have these days.



Lynch was understandably tight-lipped about Season Three of *Twin Peaks*.

Dune was a particularly testing period for you, wasn't it? Some of that artistic freedom was taken away.

A lot of people in cinema don't have final cut or total creative control, and it's a giant absurdity and sadness. It's a nightmare when you don't have the freedom to make it the way you want. The only film I've made without that was *Dune*, and it was a financial failure and it almost killed me. There was such sadness in me that



almost drove me crazy! ☹️

Twin Peaks: The Entire Mystery is available to buy on Blu-ray now.



STEPHEN
KING'S

IT

"PENNYWISE AND TIM CURRY WERE
SO CREEPY, PETRIFYING
AND HORRIBLE"

ANNETTE O'TOOLE



FLASHBACK

STEPHEN KING'S IT

25TH ANNIVERSARY

WITH A TWO-PART MOVIE ON THE HORIZON, WE SPEAK TO DIRECTOR TOMMY LEE WALLACE AND MEMBERS OF THE CAST ABOUT THE MAKING OF THE ORIGINAL 1990 TV MINISERIES ADAPTATION OF STEPHEN KING'S CREEPY KILLER CLOWN CLASSIC

Clowns are a curious oddity. Not content with trying to provoke belly laughs, they have to go and scare the heebie-jeebies out of us as well. Of course, this evil clown persona has more to do with their predominant pop culture celluloid origins than any sinister intentions from circus entertainers. Although the concept of the murderous clown had turned up in the early work of Edgar Allan Poe and Ruggero Leoncavallo, it was a twisted take on fast-food mascot Ronald McDonald in the mid-Eighties that inspired the killer clown concept and cemented those fears for modern audiences.

This has gone to the nth degree in recent times via the likes of *Batman's* Joker and *American Horror Story's* gruesome Twisty characterisation. But before that we had Pennywise, Stephen King's dancing clown antagonist and a teasing, in-your-face amalgamation of all our worst fears and phobias. And when most people think of the haunting 1990 TV miniseries *It*, it's Tim Curry's dreaded redheaded, wisecracking incarnation that they recall.

King's exhaustive 1986 novel concerned a group of seven impressionable kids, (pegged the 'Losers Club' by a tormenting bully) from the fictional American town of Derry in Maine who have encountered the malicious presence of 'It', a sinister entity that only they can see who masquerades as a scornful clown and murders innocent children. The group heroically comes together to defeat the nightmarish monster, which they come to learn from a local history book is a creature named Pennywise, responsible for a slew of local tragedies that date back centuries. They later make a pact to reunite if the creature were to ever return. 30 years later, 'It' does return, and the now middle-aged group reform in an attempt to destroy their common foe permanently.

"Stephen King is a bit misunderstood by the media as the master of horror," considers director Tommy Lee Wallace, who adapted *It* for the original two-part television miniseries. "I think most of the time he is the master of childhood. That's certainly what *It* was about – the rites of passage of childhood, especially children bound together as a team against a common foe or a common trauma of really serious and shattering proportions."



To bring the characters of the children to life, a group of enthusiastic budding young acting talents were appointed, including future *Seaquest DSV* star Jonathan Brandis, *Ginger Snaps* actress Emily Perkins, *The Wonder Years* regular Brandon Crane and a teenage Seth Green (*Buffy The Vampire Slayer*), who was appropriately cast as Richie Tozier – the most madcap member of the group. A well-known ensemble depicted the same characters in adulthood, including *The Waltons* star Richard Thomas, *Superman III* and future *Smallville* mainstay Annette O'Toole and the late John Ritter.

"I was at first a bit intimidated by my all-star cast, but my fears were unfounded – they all turned out to be generous and supportive team players," remembers Wallace. "The child actors were much more of a challenge, especially that little pest Seth Green – just kidding Seth, I'm so proud of you! I'm especially proud of the adult/child pairings, as I think we made really astute choices and got really lucky making it believable that that group of seven kids grew up to be that group of seven adults, which is no easy feat."

"I could relate to the character as I grew up without a father and with the bullying and the jokes about being a fat kid – it's not the easiest thing in the world,

because kids are mean, so I was ready for that," says Brandon Crane, who portrayed the rotund character of Ben Hanscom in his adolescent years. "I read the book immediately before I got the script, and I was sort of horrified about some of the things I thought they were going to be asking us to do. Then I realised there would inevitably be a few adjustments."

Playing Ben in his adult years was the popular TV actor Ritter. As they didn't look alike, the two worked closely to provide continuation between their various incarnations of the character. "We talked about things that we could do to kind of bring us together," reveals Crane. "We had a couple of facial expressions, like a kind of stunned look, as we knew there'd be a lot of that as we went on, and I think we settled on nail-biting too."

For the pivotal role of Pennywise, casting turned to British acting veteran Tim Curry, immortalised as Dr Frank-N-Furter in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and equally colourful (if unrecognisable) as the devilish prime villain Darkness in Ridley Scott's early fantasy flick *Legend*. "Tim Curry was a joy, and the owner of a wry, dark sense of humour, which, of course, brought great dimension to the part," continues Wallace. "Tim talked me out of too much facial rubber for Pennywise. I had chin pieces and cheekbones all designed and ready to go, and they would've been fine in a given still shot, but Tim talked me out of almost all of them, and he was right – his own face in simple clown make-up was just right."

Another gifted actor who clearly enjoyed clowning around was the teenage Green, who would go on to achieve great acclaim demonstrating his vocal range in such series as *Robot Chicken* and *Family Guy*. "There was something special about that guy," recalls Crane. "We had breakfast together, he spent the entire time going back and forth doing all these characters, and

so it seemed like a natural progression that he would work in animation some 20 years later."

Translating such an extensive book (1,100 pages) onto the screen was no mean feat. However, Wallace was pragmatic in his planning, and devoted one act to each of the seven main individual characters with the foresight that there were seven acts in a two-hour made-for-TV show. Having penned the screenplay for Brian De Palma's original 1976 adaptation of *Carrie*, Lawrence D Cohen (who would also adapt the TV series of King's alien invasion horror *The Tommyknockers*) was an auspicious choice to write the teleplay for *It*, which was ultimately a classic coming-of-age tale about childhood and how the suppression of deeply buried fears can resurface in adulthood. "Larry Cohen captured the essence of the children's camaraderie beautifully in his teleplay, especially night one of the two-night miniseries," acknowledges Wallace.

Another key character in the novel was the picturesque fictional town of Derry itself, located in the New England state of Maine, where the majority of events unfold. Stanley Park in the Canadian city of Vancouver stood in for the popular Stephen King suburban location, (which also appears in *Insomnia*, *Bag of Bones* and *Dreamcatcher* among others). "We really felt like we were in Derry," continues Crane. "All the exterior stuff was done in Stanley Park and I remember being amazed it was so woodsy and so far removed."



Stephen King stories are often about how horror can lurk within everyday middle-class environments, and with *It* this was about the breeding ground for a terrifying antagonist who has been haunting Derry for centuries. Pennywise's hideout was located literally in the depths of this town – its sewers – where the children courageously come together to confront the creature during the chilling climax of part one.

Part two catches up with the characters 30 years later following a recent child murder, which calls for them to make good on their promise to return to Derry should similar events unfold. One of the most vibrant characters was that of Beverly Marsh, the soul female member of the 'Losers Club' who ultimately emerges as defiant despite her troubled past. "What I loved about the character was the way she dealt with this terrible, lonely and abusive childhood she had and the way she found a family with these other kids," says actress Annette O'Toole, a self-confessed Stephen King fan who portrayed the character in adulthood. "She kind of gets into this club, and it doesn't really matter that she's a girl. They accept her, and she finds a group of really kindred souls."

An intimate individual who isn't afraid of expressing her emotions, Beverly attracts the childhood romantic interests of Ben Hanscom and Bill Denbrough (Richard Thomas), who rival for her affections. Controversially, a major event that occurred in the novel, which was subsequently overlooked in Wallace's adaptation, was when Beverly makes love to all the characters during a pivotal point in their adolescence. "I thought it was a terrible omission," admits O'Toole. "This was their greatest attachment



Pennywise the clown was brought to terrifying life by Tim Curry.



to one another – she thought they were all going to die, and this was a gift she was giving to each one of them, and I thought it was the most beautiful, generous love-filled gift, and it tied them all together in such an amazing way."

Nevertheless, the connection between the characters remained palpable, continuing into their lively reunion at a local Chinese restaurant that remains a light-hearted highlight of part two, and is a welcome antidote to all the gothic mayhem that eschews, despite culminating with some decidedly unsavory fortune cookie surprises (see boxout). Less convincing is the dramatising of King's arguably limp climax, let down by the surprising absence of Pennywise the clown, who morphs into a frankly laughable giant arachnophobic eight-legged organism that the group comes together to defeat.

"We called it 'the Alaskan king crab,'" laughs O'Toole. "We were making cross eyes at one another during the filming of that. Pennywise and Tim Curry were so petrifying, creepy and horrible, and I felt when I was reading the book as well, that this is not nearly as scary when it turns into this thing."

"LARRY COHEN CAPTURED THE ESSENCE OF THE CHILDREN'S CAMARADERIE"

TOMMY LEE WALLACE

"I WAS, AND
AM, VERY
PROUD OF IT"
TOMMY LEE WALLACE



Like the book, the miniseries shows the Losers Club both as kids and adults.



Talk now turns toward the fast-approaching two-part movie version from Cary Fukunaga, the young mastermind behind HBO's enthralling *True Detective* mystery drama series. "I love his style. I'm a big fan, and if I think there's anybody out there who could do that job justice it would be Fukunaga," considers Crane. "There's so much that we couldn't do [in our show] with regards to the content. I think you'd end up with a two-part feature that will be much closer to the book."

"*True Detective* was incredible, and so I think it's in good hands and that's the kind of intelligence and attention to the feel of it that he will bring," adds O'Toole.

But for now we have Tommy Lee Wallace's adaptation, and while the climax may be somewhat unavoidably unsatisfying, it is nostalgically remembered



All in all, the miniseries did a good job of retaining the book's themes.



Many disturbing elements from the book were realised in horrific form.



for its strengths, including its unforgettably gruesome Pennywise portrayal, its memorably shocking moments of on-screen visceral horror (see boxout) and its thoroughly convincing portrayal of camaraderie from both generations of the Losers Club.

"I was, and am, very, very proud of *It*," says Wallace. "More time and more money would've helped in the visual effects department, but I think we did okay with what we had, and what we had, above all else, was a brilliant cast and brilliant material. Stephen King and I corresponded after the fact, and he felt as I did about the show's strengths and weaknesses, but overall was very complimentary."



Stephen King's It is available to buy on DVD now, distributed by Warner Home Video.

MOST SHOCKING MOMENTS FROM IT

WE PICK OUT THE STANDOUT SCENES FROM TOMMY LEE WALLACE'S ADAPTATION

1 FIRST APPEARANCE OF PENNYWISE
Pennywise's first frightening appearance down a gutter attempting to lure ill-fated Georgie with a balloon gives chilling clout to the 'never talk to strangers' caveat. "There's nothing creepier. The way Tim Curry did the character, it was like woo, just thinking about it gives me chills," remembers Annette O'Toole.

2 FORTUNE COOKIE MISFORTUNE
Making effective use of convincing in-camera practical effects, the grisly fortune cookie surprises that the characters crack open during the reunion scene at a Chinese restaurant include a hideous chicken fetus, a cockroach, tarantula claws and a twitching eyeball. "It was really hard to keep a straight face," admits O'Toole. "The best one was Harry Anderson with the eye as he'd say, 'Oh god, it's eye!' which was a running joke throughout the whole thing."

3 LAKE CONFRONTATION
Little Ben Hanscom thinks he sees his deceased father calling him in the middle of a lake. But then the figure turns into a pranking Pennywise before a decomposed corpse crawls out of the waters to grab little Ben's ankle. "They shot that separately from when I was there, but they created an environment that was very easy to project fear. It all came very naturally," remembers Brandon Crane.

4 SHOWER SCENE
Psycho may have set the standard, but *It* easily helped to reinforce the showering fear when showerheads suddenly come alive and a fearsomely pointy-toothed Pennywise emerges from the drain to torment little asthma-suffering Stanley Uris (Ben Heller).

5 THAT'S NOT BEVERLY!
Pennywise is up to his old tricks in part two when he impersonates a lustful Beverly, who attempts to seduce adult love interest Ben Hanscom. Catching their reflection in a mirror, Ben discovers the horrific revelation leading to Pennywise's infamous zinger "Kiss me, fat boy!"

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO CANNON FILMS

THE COMPANY OF LOW-BROW LUNACY PROVIDED GENRE FANS WITH SOME OF THE MOST SURREAL SCHLOCK OF THE EIGHTIES. HOWEVER, GOLAN AND GLOBUS ALSO HAD AN UNSTOPPABLE AMBITION THAT ALMOST TOOK THEM TO THE VERY TOP OF TINSEL TOWN...

25 years after their celluloid Empire crumbled, Cannon Films have – among a new generation – become as obscure as Steve Guttenberg, Jane Fonda workouts, Salt-N-Pepa or any other staple of Eighties pop culture entertainment. Yet, now considered retro enough to be the focus of two new documentaries, *Electric Boogaloo: The Wild, Untold Story Of Cannon Films* and *The Go-Go Boys: The Inside Story Of Cannon Films*, the company headed by ambitious Israeli cousins, Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus, has perhaps had the last laugh.

After all, before comic-book blockbusters were a fixture of the multiplex, Cannon was there, unleashing *Superman IV: The Quest For Peace* and *Masters Of The Universe* within one month of each other and securing the rights to *Captain America* and *Spider-Man*. Furthermore, prior to conglomerate-owned theatres, Golan and Globus had their own UK-chain of celluloid palaces, thus taking out the middle man and allowing their new productions to have guaranteed foreign distribution.

With this said, Cannon Films actually existed before Golan Globus. An obscure production outfit (their 1970 drama *Joe* gave Susan Sarandon her debut), the Israeli twosome bought the struggling label outright in 1979. Prior to this investment, both

cousins had been prolific filmmakers in their native nation. Indeed, in his younger years Golan had been an apprentice for Roger Corman. In addition, during a visit to Hollywood, bunking in cheap motels and frantically knocking on doors, he successfully convinced Samuel Arkoff, another icon of marginal movie-making, to back his 1966 spy-thriller *Trunk To Cairo*.

"THEY WERE A LITTLE SURPRISED, I THINK, THAT... ENTER THE NINJA MADE THEM MONEY"

SAM FIRSTENBERG

With the Israeli film scene starting to blossom in the Seventies, the pair hit pay-dirt with a period-set, Hebrew-language sex comedy entitled *Lemon Popsicle* (1978), which in many ways prefigured the better known *Porky's* (1982). Directed by Boaz Davidson, the frequently lewd *Lemon Popsicle* played across the world, nabbed a Golden Globe nomination for 'Best Picture' and led to eight sequels and a flop US-

remake (1982's *The Last American Virgin*). Meanwhile, Golan himself continued to make waves as a director in his own right. His real life drama, *Operation Thunderbolt* (1978), even competed for the best foreign film Oscar.

Nevertheless, generally gearing their early investments towards the low-brow 'grindhouse' audience, Cannon initially became a byword for sleazy sex and violence – a tag that the company would struggle to surpass during its brief existence. For instance, the self-explanatory carnal-comedy, *The Happy Hooker Goes Hollywood* (1980) and the oddball Klaus Kinski-starring slasher *Schizoid* (1980) nabbed brief theatrical stints before finding a home in rental stores. Yet, even at this early stage, Cannon was not above aiming high, including with *The Apple* (1980), an unutterably bizarre, futuristic, Golan-directed disco-musical take on the story of Adam and Eve. One of the most notorious flops of all time, *The Apple* – which Golan claimed cost \$8 million to produce (pundits predicted this was a highly elevated number) – was a disaster, although in retrospect its kitsch quality allows it to stand out as a surprisingly enjoyable slice of silliness. Certainly, in its first year of existence, Cannon was struggling to gain ground, with only a quickly churned-out martial arts opus, *Enter The Ninja*, also helmed by Golan, and the softcore sex epic *Lady Chatterley's Lover* turning a profit.

A BATTLE FOUGHT IN THE STARS...
NOW COMES TO
HOME VIDEO.



The poster features He-Man as the central figure, a muscular man with blonde hair wearing a black harness with silver medallions and a lion's head. He holds a glowing sword in his right hand and a gauntlet in his left. Behind him is Skeletor, a skeletal figure in a black hooded robe holding a staff with a ram's head. The background is a starry space scene with a city skyline at the bottom. At the bottom left, two figures are shown in combat. At the bottom right, a figure is being held by another. The title 'MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE' is at the bottom in a stylized font.

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

"They were a little surprised, I think, that out of everything it had been *Enter The Ninja* that made them money," begins Sam Firstenberg, who would later helm *American Ninja* for Cannon. "It had been budgeted at only around \$1 million, and it had sold all over the world. Golan and Globus immediately wanted to cash in on that, so they asked me if I could do a sequel for them called *Revenge Of The Ninja*. That was my first mainstream movie"

Boaz Davidson, who had just recently followed Golan and Globus over to Hollywood, concurs. "They were making every kind of genre film back when they first came to America," states the director. "And I had written a script for a horror movie set in a hospital. It was called *X-Ray*, and they both really liked it. This was a slasher film, and of course, there had been a big

trend for these movies with *Halloween* and *Friday The 13th*. They knew this sort of thing could be done cheap and make a little money."

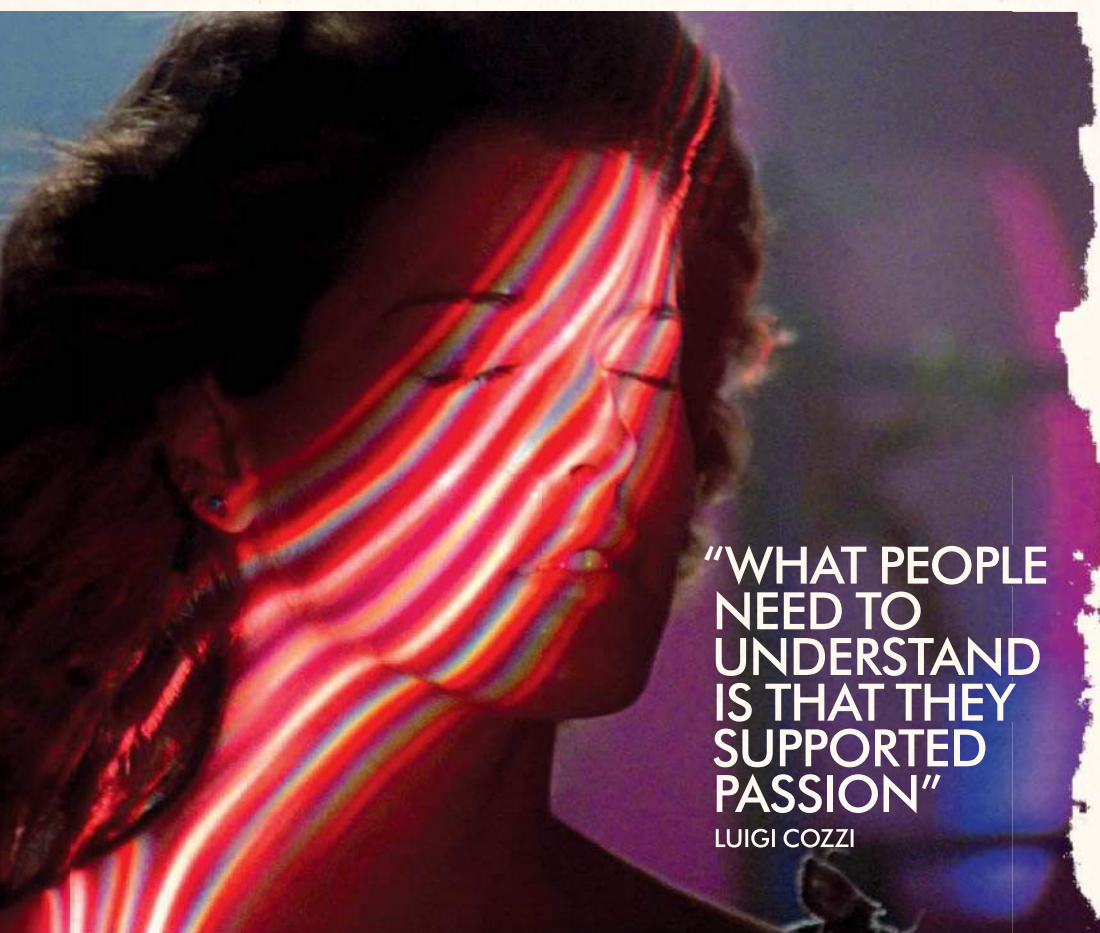
While 1981's *X-Ray* (released in the UK under the moniker of *Hospital Massacre*), which starred the Playboy model – and ex-girlfriend of Hugh Hefner – Barbi Benton, was another minimal money-maker, it at least indicated what people could expect from a Cannon venture: nudity, violence and a lack of any coherent story (in *X-Ray* a female patient, seeking a brief check-up, is forbidden from leaving a medical ward!) would be the name of the game. However, this formula was finally paying off: largely on the back of *Enter The Ninja* and a delicate sleeper drama entitled *Body And Soul*, Golan and Globus were able to confirm, at the end of 1981, that their company

had skyrocketed from a value of \$500,000 to \$3 million. If the duo had decided to stick to this lower-risk 'B-movie' approach, perhaps Cannon would still be around today. In contrast, of course, they had higher aspirations, and as 1982 began, they were able to reveal their first international star: Charles Bronson.

If not quite on the A-list, the ageing action thespian was still a household name. Following in the footsteps of the old Hollywood studio system, Golan and Globus had the *Magnificent Seven* icon signed to a seven-figure exclusive contract. When Bronson's *Death Wish II* (1982) made \$50 million worldwide on a \$2 million budget, it seemed like a wise decision – despite the fact the vigilante sequel, which saw the actor take revenge on a gang of rapists, was critically destroyed and artistically redundant.

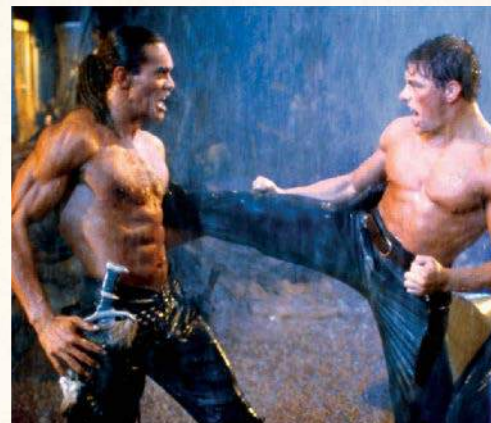
Golan would also state, "For me, *Star Wars* is the most artistic movie ever made. Bringing people to see it for half a billion dollars – that's something." While few journalists at the time anticipated the weight of these words, what the Hollywood hopeful was ultimately indicating was the direction that his company would take. For fans of sci-fi, Cannon might never have produced a *Star Wars*-sized success, but they did dabble with some mind-bogglingly bizarre genre properties. Among the most memorable is surely Italian director Luigi Cozzi's bout of bicep-ridden banality *Hercules* (1983), which features Lou Ferrigno as the titular muscleman wrestling some stop-motion monsters and saving the planet from an under-dressed villainess in the shapely shape of Sybil Danning.

"What people need to understand about Golan and Globus is that they supported passion," affirms Cozzi. "For me, making cinema was not even about



"WHAT PEOPLE
NEED TO
UNDERSTAND
IS THAT THEY
SUPPORTED
PASSION"

LUIGI COZZI



Cannon's appeal was rooted in its willingness to give chances to up-and-coming filmmakers.

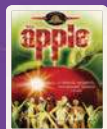
Runaway Train was one of Cannon's more acclaimed offerings.



The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2, Tobe Hooper's follow-up to his own classic, was a massive disappointment.

TOP 10 CANNON FILMS

The must-see list of Cannon genre products...



1. THE APPLE (1980)

If you ever imagined the fable of Adam and Eve as an all-spandex, all-dancing, all-singing disco-jive then *The Apple* is the movie for you. Menahem Golan's most notorious directorial effort is one of Cannon's flagship flops. Region 1 DVDs can be found on Amazon, distributed by MGM.



2. 10 TO MIDNIGHT (1983)

This tense Charles Bronson-led slasher sickie has a serial killer on the run throughout Los Angeles. Taking on the tone of such slice-and-dice classics as *Maniac* (1980), *10 To Midnight* has yet to really win its place in horror fandom. Distributed by 20th Century Fox, it is available on Region 2 DVD.



3. NINJA III: THE DOMINATION (1984)

Mixing chopsocky action – including an opening ninja-slaughter spree – with horror film theatrics, *Ninja III: The Domination* is brilliantly baffling. It can be found on region-free Blu-ray on Amazon.



4. AMERICAN NINJA (1985)

Imagine a live-action DC comic from this period, and you more or less have *American Ninja*. Mystical mayhem and Michael Dudikoff as a James Dean-style reluctant hero all add up to a riotous bout of bicep-flexing madness. It was recently released on Blu-ray, distributed by 88 Films.



5. LIFEFORCE (1985)

Tobe Hooper's mind-bending, Freudian-heavy Marxist fable (a naked space lady destroys patriarchy and forces men to indulge in same-sex snogging?) has to be seen to be believed, but despite terrible acting, this is one of Cannon's most notable achievements. It can be found on Blu-ray, distributed by Arrow.



6. RUNAWAY TRAIN (1985)

Adapted from a story by the great Akira Kurosawa, *Runaway Train* is a borderline 'genre' flick, but the action-adventure plot, in which two escaped convicts board the locomotive of the title, is frequently hair-raising, excellently acted and visually involving. Arrow released it on Blu-ray in 2013.



7. THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE PART 2 (1986)

Tobe Hooper further crippled his career with this spoof splatter-sequel. Forget the naysayers; it's one of the finest fear follow-ups ever. A Region 1 Blu-ray can be found online, distributed by 20th Century Fox.



8. MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE (1987)

Despite only paying lip-service to the source material, this has aged well. Taking He-Man to Earth was a budgetary decision, but the film itself features a few enjoyable tussles. A Region 2 DVD is available via MGM.



9. SUPERMAN IV: THE QUEST FOR PEACE (1987)

Make no mistake: this is terrible. But with copious amount alcohol it is also a laugh riot and shockingly watchable. Outside the *Superman* multi-packs, Warner have released it individually on Region 2 DVD.



10. CYBORG (1989)

Wham, bam – it's Jean Claude Van Damme! In this cheapjack but cheerfully unpretentious futuristic action opus, the Muscles from Brussels stars in an abandoned sequel to *Masters Of The Universe*. It is available on Region 2 DVD via 20th Century Fox.

the money; I just love fantasy films, and *Hercules* was a dream project. I told them I adored Ray Harryhausen and I would do anything to pay homage to his work. Golan and Globus responded to that – they also liked these old films, so they gave me a job. If they knew you lived and breathed movies they would give you a chance. You don't have people like that in the movie business anymore."

Returning a solid profit on a small investment, *Hercules* made up for such serious Cannon catastrophes as the \$25 million Mark Thatcher-inspired adventure *Sahara* (1983), which starred Brooke Shields (amusingly, Golan believed she might be nominated for an Oscar). Meanwhile, early signs of the company's dubious political persuasions came from *The Ambassador* (1983), a drama centred upon the Gaza strip that forthrightly opens with the following crawl: "The Middle East is a powder keg ready to explode. Israel with a population of 4 million is surrounded by eight Arab countries with an 80 million population." No prizes for guessing which side *The Ambassador* takes.

Further financial disasters from this period include Michael Winner's typically vicious *The Wicked Lady* (1983), in which Faye Dunaway sentenced herself to a Razzie nomination for Worst Actress, and *Bolero* (1984), a controversial sex farce highlighting endless shots of Bo Derek's breasts and not much else. At the close of 1983, with news surfacing that Chuck Norris was now

"AMERICAN NINJA WAS A COMIC-BOOK MOVIE. IT WAS PURE FANTASY"

MICHAEL DUDIKOFF

signed with Cannon and Sylvester Stallone had agreed to a \$12 million fee to develop a new project with the Israeli film enthusiasts, a distribution deal with MGM was carved out. Finally, it seemed, Golan and Globus might have been on their way to the big leagues.

Yet, Cannon's biggest hit of this era would not be *Hercules*, Sam Firstenberg's *Revenge Of The Ninja*, or the superior Charles Bronson slasher flick *10 To Midnight*. Rather it was a low-rent body-pump blockbuster called *Breakin'* that, with just \$1.2 million behind it, grossed \$60 million worldwide (\$38 million coming from the US).

MGM was inevitably thrilled, but when Golan pushed them to follow this up with the Cannon comedy *Making The Grade* – one of the year's most notable flops – MGM decided to call it a day. Just like that, Cannon was forced back to square one. Making the decision to buy out a number of British cinema chains, they at least had their sights set on the future, while Tri-Star agreed to take on some of the costs for 1985's would-be summer smash *Lifeforce*. In the interim, the jingoistic nastiness of Chuck Norris going back to Vietnam to win the war for flag-waving Americans everywhere, in 1984's *Missing In Action*, was a formidable cash-grabber in cinemas. More interesting, though, was the company's strange dedication to outlandish genre jaunts. For instance, Sam Firstenberg's *Ninja III: The Domination* (1984) crossed *The Exorcist*

Cannon's *Superman IV: The Quest For Peace* marked an infamous low point in the film saga.



with kung-fu as a female fitness instructor is possessed by a demonic ancient Japanese shinobi. This bizarrely watchable bout of horror and hokum is a personal favourite of Quentin Tarantino, even if it baffled audiences of the time.

"No one knew what to make of it," laughs Firstenberg of *Ninja III*. "Golan called me and said, 'Sam, this time I want a heroine and not a hero.' So that is how you got *Ninja III*, but it was not a success. I don't know if it was, because there had not really been a *Ninja I* and a *Ninja II*, or if the audiences wanted male action heroes back then... who knows?"

Tobe Hooper, meanwhile, fresh from *Poltergeist* (1982), went to London to begin work on *Lifeforce* at Pinewood. Cannon had pinned a lot of hope on *Lifeforce*, which they hoped would be their own *Star Wars*. It need not matter that Hooper was shooting an R-rated and almost incomprehensible mish-mash of skin-flick, vampire-horror and disaster movie, *Lifeforce* was budgeted at \$25 million (in comparison: this was almost the same price that Steven Spielberg had been afforded for *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom*). A massive money-loser, *Lifeforce* has nonetheless gained in stature as the years have progressed thanks to Hooper's stylish, if decidedly trippy, vision of Earth under attack from a beautiful nude female space alien.

"I think the big problem is that they tried to market that movie as a serious science fiction film, which it

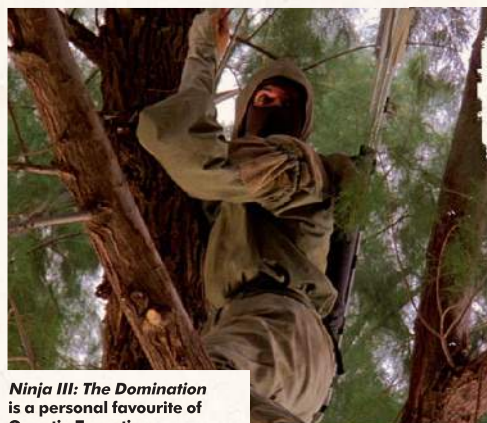
wasn't," states Hooper. "The expectations that were given to that film were like *2001: A Space Odyssey*. But when I was making it I was doing something that paid homage to *Quatermass And The Pit* – you know, just a big sci-fi adventure with lots of cutting-edge special effects."

Not only did *Lifeforce* seriously derail Hooper's directorial ambitions (his next two films for Cannon, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre Part 2* and a remake of *Invaders From Mars*, would be drastically trimmed of their cash-flow), its box office death only encouraged further financial crisis and critical disdain for Golan and Globus. So it was, then, that Golan claimed, "I don't want to be known for schlock", and surprised many by immediately signing a number of feted arthouse auteurs.

Russian director Andrei Konchalovsky was brought on board for the Oscar-orientated World War II heartbreaker *Maria's Lovers* (1984) and the impressive thriller *Runaway Train* (1985). The latter won itself Academy Award nominations for its stars, Jon Voight and Eric Roberts, and is widely seen as Cannon's finest moment, but box-office receipts were low. In the UK, for instance, with the full force of Cannon's own cinema chain promoting it, *Runaway Train* averaged a gross of just £1,366 per screen. Golan – who had fast become the face of his company (Globus tended to remain in the background) – also famously signed Jean Luc



Despite Cannon dubbing it "the *Star Wars* of the Eighties", *Masters Of The Universe* is best remembered as a flop.



Ninja III: The Domination is a personal favourite of Quentin Tarantino.



The Tobe Hooper-directed *Lifeforce* was one of Cannon's first big loss-makers.

Godard to his *King Lear* (1987) contract on a napkin at Cannes, and backed Franco Zeffirelli's impressive Golden Globe-nominated adaptation of *Othello* (1986). Tirelessly dedicated to gaining a Palme D'Or at the annual movie bash, the French celebrations were cynically dubbed 'the Cannon Film Festival' by critics and onlookers.

Other 'establishment' projects at Cannon HQ included Norman Mailer's classic *Tough Guys Can't Dance* (1987), Mickey Rourke's downtrodden *Barfly* (1987) and Meryl Streep's true-life shocker *A Cry In The Dark* (1988). More lavishly funded titles also emerged in the shape of *King Solomon's Mines* (1985), starring Richard Chamberlain and Sharon Stone, and *Firewalker* (1986), another *Indiana Jones*-style matinee, which tried to turn Chuck Norris into a comedy hero (!).

Despite such star-name credentials, though, it was the sequel-spawning *American Ninja* (1985), which launched its star, Michael Dudikoff, into VHS-era fame, and the brutal Warner Bros co-production *Cobra* (1986), with a monotone Sylvester Stallone, that were proving to be audience favourites.

"*American Ninja* was a comic-book movie," admits Dudikoff. "It was pure fantasy – ninjas with mystical powers and crazy stuff like that [laughs]. Chuck Norris was originally going to do it, but I heard he didn't want to cover his face at any point in the movie. So it came to



CAPTAIN CHAOS

How Cannon beat Marvel to the punch with Cap

Long before Chris Evans made the United States' most formidable flag-waving crime-fighter a multiplex fixture, Menahem Golan was determined to work his own 'magic' on the Marvel legend. Unfortunately, the Albert Pyun-helmed *Captain America*, released direct-to-video in 1992 an entire two years after it was completed, by Golan's post-Cannon venture, 21st Century Film Corporation, was a certified dud.

"The problem was that after Cannon had gone under, Golan didn't have all of his financial pieces in place yet," recalls Pyun. "I remember that we went to a bank in London and they said they would loan against the contracts and, thus, provide us with our funding – a pretty standard motion picture deal. The general consensus was that this would be a hit movie. But when we arrived on location in Yugoslavia, the agreement collapsed at the very last minute. For several weeks we had no money at all, so Menahem sent one of the producers around Europe to collect capital from pre-selling to each territory. As each little bit came in we began to get underway. It was a crazy experience."

The consequence is light on special effects, and looks frequently like an austerity version of the real thing – but *Captain America* has also become something of an obscure footnote in the vast legacy of Marvel film adaptations. As fans clamoured to see this notorious super-flick, the California Comic Con announced a rare big-screen showing in 2013 – which was predictably packed-out. A special edition Blu-ray was then issued in the United States, finally giving Cap's least-seen endeavour a chance to be reappraised.



**"WITHOUT
CANNON,
LESS PEOPLE
GET A
CHANCE
TO MAKE
MOVIES"**
SAM FIRSTENBERG

me and then, of course, it became a huge hit and a big action franchise."

Alas, with *American Ninja 2* (1987) doing untold damage to Dudikoff's career (it was shot in apartheid-era South Africa, then under a UN cultural boycott), the Golan and Globus touch could also cause problems. "They shot a lot of stuff out there at the time for financial reasons," claims the director Albert Pyun, who made post-*Armageddon* weirdie *Radioactive Dreams* (1985), sci-fi romance *Alien From LA* (1988) and Jean-Claude Van Damme's *Cyborg* (1989) for the company. "There were a lot of funds trying to get out of South Africa because some people felt it might break into civil war after apartheid fell. There was still unrest out there, but South Africa was a country going through transition, and being out there allowed me to see things that most people would never encounter. Remember as well that I am not white – I am Asian. I met some Indian people in South Africa, and they had it rough out there too. It was not just black people – it was brown people and yellow people too that suffered under that system. So I am Asian, and I had to go into the heart of the country to scout locations, and that was tough."

Sadly, Golan couldn't make do with just being a mini-movie mogul. Instead, he also had to direct – even when the results were as execrable as 1986's *The Delta Force*, which featured Norris and Lee Marvin battling Palestinian terrorists (in an amazing act of insensitivity, Robert Forster plays the main villain in brownface) and 1987's *Over The Top*. The latter, a drama starring Stallone as a down-on-his-luck arm wrestler, is notable only for causing stores that stocked its merchandise tie-ins to flood their bargain bins with unwanted action figures.



While it was initially panned, there is still some love for the Dolph Lundgren-starring *Masters Of The Universe*.



Action flick *Cyborg* starred Jean-Claude Van Damme.

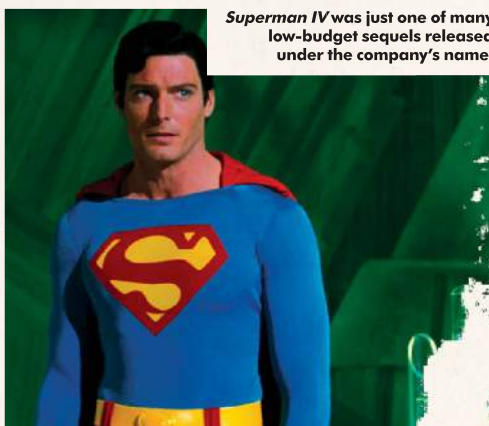
Most infamously of all, Cannon tried to revitalise the *Superman* franchise with *Superman IV: The Quest For Peace* (1987). On paper at least, it seemed like a good idea. Gene Hackman, who had sat out on *Superman III* (1983), was convinced to return to the franchise, along with Margot Kidder (Lois Lane). Moreover, a reliable old hand, in director Sidney J Furie (*The Ipcress File*) was called in to oversee the action, which was going to be filmed entirely in Pinewood and Milton Keynes. Inevitably, attempting to convince audiences that the two locations could double for Manhattan was no easy task, and in the end, *Superman IV* became best known as a byword for 'bad'.

In actuality, the Cold War-era story – in which Superman decides to spontaneously rid the world of nuclear weapons (which, would have had him pegged as an international terrorist) – probably killed the film's chances from the offset. Co-penned by Christopher Reeve, the plot has Lex Luthor 'birth' an atomic antagonist by the name of Nuclear Man (played by muscleman Mark Pillow). What follows is mind-numbingly naïve, with human beings breathing in outer space without any sort of protection, objects flying in and out of Earth without being incinerated, and some shoddy effects. Adding to the production's problems, the costs were dramatically cut from \$40 million to \$17 million so that Cannon could invest in their other great hope for the year: *Masters Of The Universe*.

This was the motion picture Cannon dubbed "the *Star Wars* of the Eighties", but despite a surprisingly good-humoured turn from star-to-be Dolph Lundgren as He-Man, the film deviated so far from its own toy shop mythology that it might as well have not bothered basing itself on anything. Still, even though *Masters Of*



Runaway Train saw Jon Voight receive an Academy Award nomination for Best Actor.



Superman IV was just one of many low-budget sequels released under the company's name.



Today, Cannon Films is best remembered as a cult oddity.

The Universe was better than *Superman IV*, it crashed in cinemas, with disastrous receipts.

"It was 1987 that was the beginning of the end for Cannon," continues Pyun. "There was the big market crash that year and the junk bond market collapsed. A lot of the funding for Cannon came from that, so their cash flow stopped and they got into a lot of difficulties."

Sadly, the final years of Cannon are a depressing lot: more sequels to *American Ninja*, *The Delta Force* and *Missing In Action* and an aborted sequel to *Masters Of The Universe* that became 1989's *Cyborg*. Meanwhile, a lease on Marvel's *Spider-Man* was, they hoped, the ticket to that elusive major hit, but the web-slinger was unlikely to scale the heights of New York any time soon.

"The problem with *Spider-Man* is that when I looked at it, I felt that we just did not have the money or technology to do it properly," states Tobe Hooper, who was originally announced as the director. "We would occasionally speak about it, but after I did *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre Part 2*, I had fulfilled my contract at Cannon and they started to have their financial problems too. I loved those guys though, and I wish we could have done *Spider-Man*."

As the Nineties began, and audiences responded with apathy to the likes of *American Ninja 3: Blood Hunt* (1989), Golan and Globus were forced into bankruptcy, and only communicated via their respective legal teams. Pathé purchased the group's library, and that, it seemed, was that. The cousins themselves, however, embarked on a final feud: two rival films that aimed to cash in on the popularity of the Lambada dance movement were announced – one produced by Golan, the other by Globus. Yes, Cannon had finally come to this: a proverbial dance-off competition on

STRANGE DAYS

The times when Cannon Films misfired

Perhaps the most bizarre, but oddly rewarding, element of Cannon Films was their ability to mis-match directors with projects. Tobe Hooper, of course, had already proven his blockbuster credentials with Universal's widescreen slasher *The Funhouse* (1981) and *Polltergeist* (1982), albeit with reported assistance from Steven Spielberg.

Nevertheless, leaving the man who had made *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974) in charge of a \$25 million blockbuster like *Lifeforce*, which was poised to decide the fortunes of Cannon's immediate future, looks like the suicide note it turned out to be.

Other delirious decisions from the pair include offering *Spider-Man* to *Death Wish*'s chief hack Michael Winner and also Joseph Zito – the director who had made such ultra-violent horror flicks as *The Prowler* (1981) and *Friday The 13th: The Final Chapter* (1984). Zito had been slogging it out for Cannon on such sanguine-spilling action nastiness as *Missing in Action* and the brutal Chuck Norris communist-killing outing *Invasion USA* (1985). Exactly what credentials Zito would have brought to a child-suitable superhero opus is anyone's guess, but after Hooper bailed on *Spider-Man*, this was the man who took over the project's immediate development. Just keep repeating: at least it wasn't Michael Winner.

Likewise, when Golan and Globus found some funds in Rome, they began to seek out someone who could helm a comedic medieval adventure romp starring two insanely muscled identical twins. Their choice? *Cannibal Holocaust*'s Ruggero Deodato. Yes, the man who had birthed the bloodiest of all 'video nasties' was now making a slapstick schlock-adventure out in Italy. The end result of this, 1987's consistently unfunny *The Barbarians*, really needs to be seen to be believed.

the big screen. In the end, Globus presented audiences with *Lambada*, while Golan opted for *Lambada: The Forbidden Dance*. An incensed Globus, who registered the 'Lambada' title first, sued his cousin into a title change that simply stated *The Forbidden Dance*. It was all for naught, though, as both movies opened, to little fanfare, on the same day: 16 March 1990.

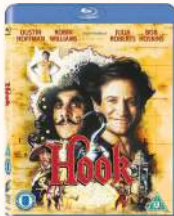
"Without Cannon, you just have less people getting a chance to make movies," says Sam Firstenberg. "My first introduction to them was in 1975. I was in LA, and Golan was producing and directing a film with Tony Curtis called *Lepke*. I met him one evening, and I introduced myself and asked him if I could possibly get a job on his crew. He said, 'Well, how much do you want paid?' I said, 'I don't want money, just experience, just an opportunity to learn...' He replied, 'In that case you are hired.' I brought the coffee and the chairs for the crew to sit on. I did odd jobs on a few things for him after that, and then I became one of Cannon's main filmmakers. No one else was like that in Hollywood."

When Golan passed away last year aged 85, it was certainly the conclusion of an amazing life. While Globus, now aged 71, became reacquainted and friendly with his cousin in the years before he died, Cannon could only really have existed in the Eighties. Every bit as much a representation of that free-wheeling and financially precarious decade as Ronald Reagan or Duran Duran, the movie studio that aimed for the stars, but had to make do with cult superstardom, makes for a fascinating document of some of cinema's guiltiest pleasures. ☞

The *American Ninja 1-4* Collector's Edition Blu-ray is available to buy now, distributed by 88 Films.

LAST SUMMER, CINEMA LOST A LEGEND IN ROBIN WILLIAMS. HIS SENSE OF FUN AND FLAIR FOR THE FANTASTICAL MADE HIM A PERFECT MATCH FOR PETER PAN IN *HOOK*, SPIELBERG'S RE-IMAGINING OF JM BARRIE'S CLASSIC STORY. SCIFINOW REMEMBERS WHAT MADE IT MAGICAL...

HOOK



Film

RUNNING TIME:

144 mins

RELEASE DATE:

11 December 1991

DIRECTOR:

Steven Spielberg

WRITERS: James V Hart,

Malia Scotch Marmo,

Nick Castle

CAST: Robin Williams,

Dustin Hoffman, Julia

Roberts, Bob Hoskins,

Maggie Smith

Everyone knows the story: a flying boy and a fairy appear in a nursery one starry night and take three children with them to Neverland, following the second star to the right and straight on 'til morning. There, they meet mermaids and fight pirates, never wanting to grow up.

Hook is the same story in reverse. Peter (Robin Williams) is an adult who doesn't want to be a kid. But everyone knows that story too. It's a scientific fact that 99 per cent of the world's movie-watching population has seen *Hook* at least six times. You can look it up.

Peter Banning is a lawyer. He's not selfish or power-hungry; he's just not that great a bloke. As far as his wife and kids are concerned, breaking promises is the norm for him. He makes phone calls through his daughter Maggie (Amber Scott)'s school plays and misses his son Jack (Charlie Korsmo)'s baseball games altogether.

While family tensions are high, the Bannings fly to London to visit Peter's old foster mother, Granny Wendy (Maggie Smith). The plane journey doesn't go well; Jack is still mad at his dad for bailing at his baseball game, and Peter is scared of heights. We all solemnly bow our heads at the irony, not to mention the problems that are bound to ensue.

Once in London, Peter and his wife pop on their glad rags and take Granny Wendy out for a charity dinner held in her honour. They leave the kids home with the maid and Tootles (Arthur Malet), an old man with flyaway hair who has lost his marbles in every sense of the phrase.

Returning home, the three stumble up the front steps of the house. But something isn't quite right; the front door has been smashed, and something has scratched



The Lost Boys taught Peter what it was to live again.

"HAVE TO SAVE MAGGIE, HAVE TO SAVE JACK. HOOK IS BACK"

the wall all the way up the staircase. The film score has turned serious and sinister. "The children..." whispers Wendy, and they thunder up the stairs.

The beds in the nursery are empty, and the window is wide open. Someone has left a note on parchment paper pinned to the door with a sword: 'Dear Peter – Your presence is required at the request of your children. Kindest personal regards, Hook.'

Tootles eerily appears in the doorway and walks slowly towards Peter.

"Have to fight. Have to fly. Have to crow. Have to save Maggie, have to save Jack. Hook is back."

"Who?" asks Peter. Wendy faints.

The search for the children is futile; there are no leads to go on. Later that night, when Peter is alone and still dressed in half

his tux, he is paid a visit by a fairy called Tinkerbell, in the form of Academy Award-winning actress Julia Roberts.

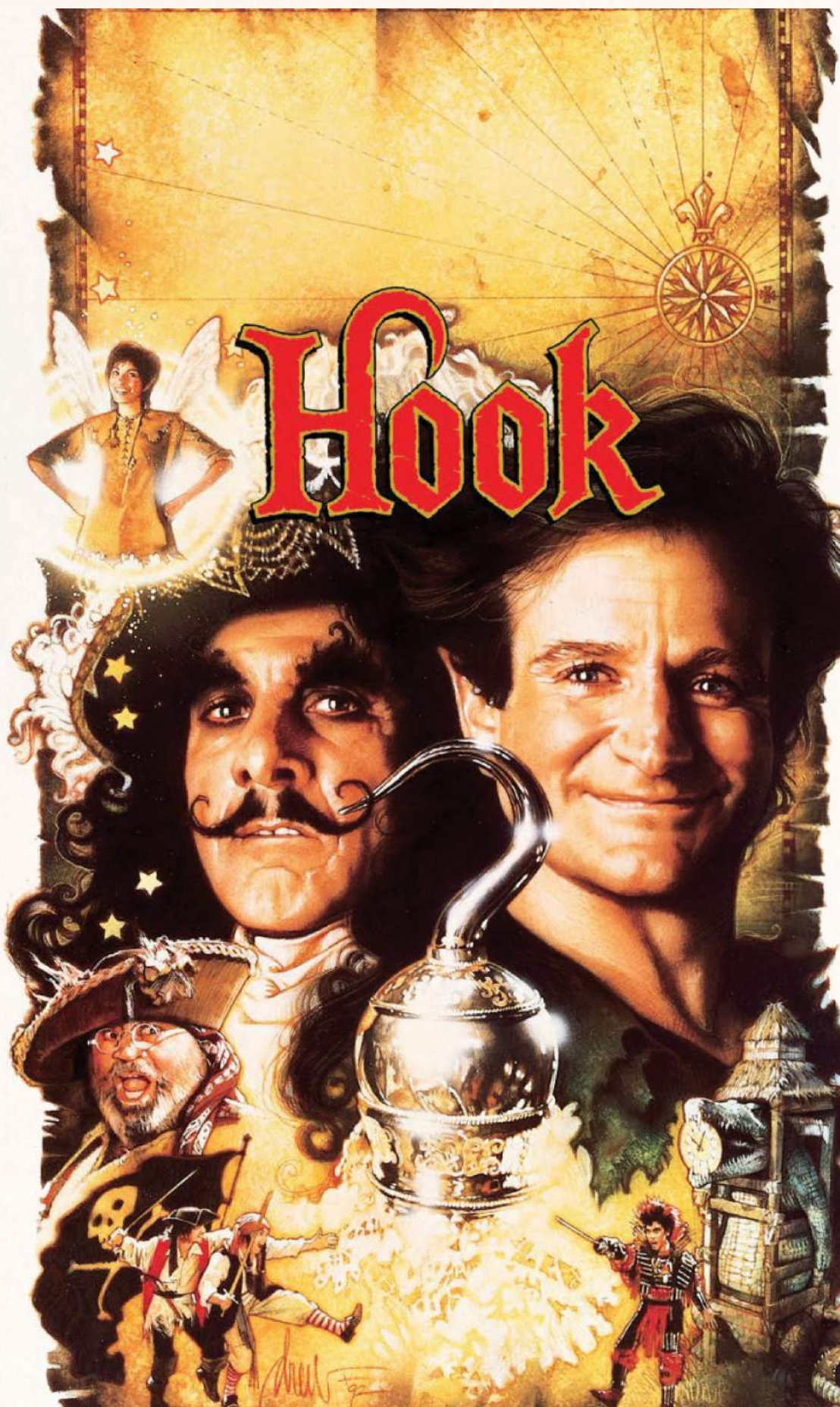


Peter reckons he must be on drugs, and tries to kill her. Tinkerbell tells him he is actually Peter Pan, and that they used to be friends. She kidnaps him and takes him back to Neverland, where he belongs.

Once there, the two drop in on the pirate town, and are confronted by the one and only Captain James Hook, played by a hairier-than-life Dustin Hoffman, and his second in command, Smee (an equally hairy Bob Hoskins). Jack and Maggie are in a net hanging from the rigging of Hook's ship.

Peter Banning is a cut-throat lawyer who spends too much time with his fax machine and not enough with his family. One night, while visiting his foster mother Wendy in London, his children Jack and Maggie are kidnapped by Captain James Hook. Just when all hope seems lost,

Peter is paid a visit by a fairy called Tinkerbell. She tries to convince him that he was once a hero, and takes him to Neverland to save his kids. Before he has a chance of bringing Jack and Maggie home, however, Tinkerbell and the Lost Boys must help Peter jog his memory so he can fight, fly and crow, and remember how to live.



CLASSIC QUOTES

"FIREFLY FROM HELL! BIG DAMN BUG!"

PETER

"HE'LL CROW. HE'LL FIGHT. HE'LL FLY. AND THEN... HE'LL DIE"

HOOK

"IF I'M A MAGGOT BURGER, WHY DON'T YOU JUST EAT ME?! YOU TWO-TONED, ZEBRA-HEADED, SLIME-COATED, PIMPLE-FARMING, PARAMECIUM BRAIN, MUNCHING-ON-YOUR-OWN-MUCUS, SUFFERING FROM PETER PAN ENVY!"

PETER

"IT IS TRUE. YOU DID GROW UP. I DRANK POISON FOR YOU. YOU USED TO CALL ME 'TINK'. HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING?"

TINKERBELL

"I'LL TELL YOU WHAT A PARAMECIUM IS. THAT'S A PARAMECIUM! IT'S A ONE-CELLED CRITTER WITH NO BRAIN THAT CAN'T FLY! DON'T MESS WITH ME, MAN! I'M A LAWYER!"

PETER

"YOU ARE THE PAN"

RUFIO

"EVERY TIME SOMEONE SAYS 'I DON'T BELIEVE IN FAIRIES', SOMEWHERE THERE'S A FAIRY THAT FALLS DOWN DEAD"

TINKERBELL

"I'VE JUST HAD AN APOSTROPHE"

HOOK

"TO DIE WILL BE A GREAT ADVENTURE"

PETER

"KILL THE LAWYER!"

THE LOST BOYS

"PETER PAN'S MY... DAD?"

MAGGIE

When he left Neverland, Peter was a kid. He could fly, fight and crow, and was Hook's great and worthy opponent. But now, he can't fly, he can't fight and he can't crow. Sure, he has a mortgage and a law degree, but he's forgotten who he is. He can't even climb the rigging and touch his children's outstretched fingers because of the whole vertigo thing. Not convinced that his great and worthy opponent is actually that worthy or great, Hook agrees to give Peter three days to get himself back into flying, fighting, crowing shape for a war between the pirates and the Lost Boys.

Unfortunately, the Lost Boys aren't convinced either. But Tinkerbell remains adamant, and convinces them to help her prepare Peter for the war anyway. But before things can go any further, in swoops Rufio (Dante Basco), leader of the Lost Boys and unofficial king of the dickwads. He's completely, definitely not convinced that Peter is the real Peter Pan.

After an intense training montage, they all settle down for dinner, and Peter is shocked to find that the food is imaginary.

The Lost Boys tuck right in around him, but Peter looks on, somewhat hungry and confused. He's been away from Neverland for so many years that he can't play along.

Rufio is not impressed. "Eat your heart out, you wrinkled, crinkled fat-bag," he says. The Lost Boys go wild.

Peter is appalled. "You're a very ill-mannered young man, you know that?"

The preceding conversation results in the best shade-throwing scene in movie history.

"Math tutor," zings Peter.

"Pinhead," Rufio hits back.

"Prison barber."

"Mother lover."

"Near-sighted gynecologist."

"Lying, crying, spying, prying ultra-pig!"

"You lewd, crude, rude, bag of pre-chewed food dude!"

The burns are coming thick and fast, but Rufio soon breaks under the pressure.

"You... you man! You stupid, stupid man!"

Now the Lost Boys are cheering on Peter. Lost in the moment, Peter scoops a



Hoffman's wig and eyebrows became nearly as iconic as the film itself.



Dustin Hoffman's Hook faces up to Peter Banning – not Pan.



Julie Roberts as the red-haired, pixie-cut Tinkerbell – er, bell.

IT'S ALL HIGH BROW

Five of the most noteworthy eyebrows in sci-fi

SPOCK STAR TREK



1 An obvious one, but look at that face. With those cheekbones and that intellect, his whole head is sharp enough to cut cheese. Nimoy's shaped brows are perhaps the most iconic in history.

RYGEL XVI FARSCAPE



2 Rygel's eyebrows are so far off the hook that they are barely on his face. A strong, sophisticated look for Hynerians everywhere. Fashion statement or simply an outrageously brilliant gene pool? You decide.

SYLAR HEROES



3 Zachary Quinto hit the jackpot in the gene pool, as Sylar's fantastic eyebrows in *Heroes* also happen to be his own. He subsequently lent them to Spock for *Star Trek*.

spoonful of nothing from the bowl in front of him and flicks it in Rufio's face. And there's food all over his nose.



Suddenly, there's food everywhere: steaming turkey legs, vegetables and desserts in every colour fill the pots and pans. Peter is finally using his imagination.

The food fight that follows sparks Peter's transition from lawyer Peter Banning to flying, fighting, crowing Peter Pan. His ears grow pointy, his hair gets more windswept and he swaps his tux for tights and a sword. He regains his memories from when he was in Neverland, and becomes the Pan he was always meant to be.

Finally war-ready, Peter, Tinkerbell and the Lost Boys return to Captain Hook's ship. While they were away, Hook had been brainwashing Jack and Maggie into loving him more than their own dad. Maggie managed to stay strong, but Jack, the little traitor, smashed a pocket watch Peter gave him and got himself decked out to look just like Hook.

More determined than ever to win his children back, Peter swoops in, saves Maggie and joins Rufio (who is now his

close friend) in a sword-fight with Hook, which results in Rufio being stabbed. Peter cradles him and, with his last breath, Rufio says he wishes he had a dad like Peter.

Jack realises what a massive tit he's been, and asks his dad to take him and Maggie home. As if on cue, a giant stuffed crocodile falls on Hook and kills him. A bittersweet celebration follows, and Peter is finally free leave with his children.

On returning home, Peter is a changed man. He finally realises the value of his family and having a youthful heart.

Opinions about *Hook* are usually mixed. Some think it is bangarang, and refuse to budge even when confronted with criticism about that one scene where Tinkerbell gets massive and confesses her love for Peter in a spangly ball gown. Others think it sucked, and always bring up that one scene just to annoy the bangarang group.

Production for the film was a disaster. The 76-day shooting schedule went to 116 days and the budget went from \$48 million to \$80 million due to shooting taking so long. Roberts was reportedly nicknamed 'Tinkerhell' because she was so difficult to work, with and the Lost Boys put Spielberg off wanting any more kids.

All that aside, *Hook* still managed to be the fourth highest-grossing film of 1991, beating *The Silence Of The Lambs* and *The Addams Family* in the top ten. It wasn't a big award winner – Roberts lost out on the Golden Raspberry Award to Sean Young as the dead twin in *A Kiss Before Dying* – but TriStar Pictures made a tidy little profit of \$50 million, and we got to see Robin Williams in tights.

Though it had an all-star cast, *Hook* was really Williams' film. It was splattered with references to his earlier work, like *Good Morning Vietnam* ("Good morning, Neverland!"), *Dead Poets' Society* and *Seize The Day*. His casting in it was also flawless. The late actor radiated warmth and youthful energy, so the story of Peter Pan, the boy who never grew up, was a perfect fit for him. 🍀



Hook is available to buy now on Blu-ray and DVD.



Peter (Robin Williams) reflects on what his life has become.



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PETER PAN (1924)

This black-and-white silent adventure film was the first screen adaptation of the play by JM Barrie.

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Johnny Depp stars as JM Barrie as he strikes up a friendship with the family who inspired Peter Pan.

YOUR TAKE ON THE CLASSIC

WHAT YOU THOUGHT @SCIFINOW



"BANGARAAAAAANG!" @TanjaWho



"One of my favourite childhood movies. What an adventure!" @wildfire198



"MY CHILDHOOD! A re-imagining of Peter Pan made magical by Williams, Hoffman, Hoskins – and RU-FI-O!" @Steppenfreak



"One of my favourite movies growing up, and I still love it now." @bubbley_beez



"The kids didn't seem to enjoy it much but the grown ups had fun, didn't they?" @TheCrowLady

POISON IVY

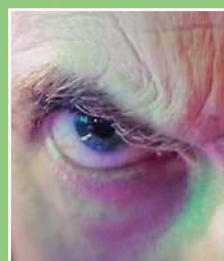
BATMAN & ROBIN



4 Technically, those aren't her real eyebrows, but we are willing to overlook that fact due to how fabulously Poison Ivy rocks the style. And let's face it, everything about her is simply fabulous.

THE 12TH DOCTOR

DOCTOR WHO



5 Most iconic 'brows of the Year goes to Peter Capaldi for their starring role in 'The Day Of The Doctor' last November. They have since continued to be a topic of the latest episodes of *Doctor Who*.

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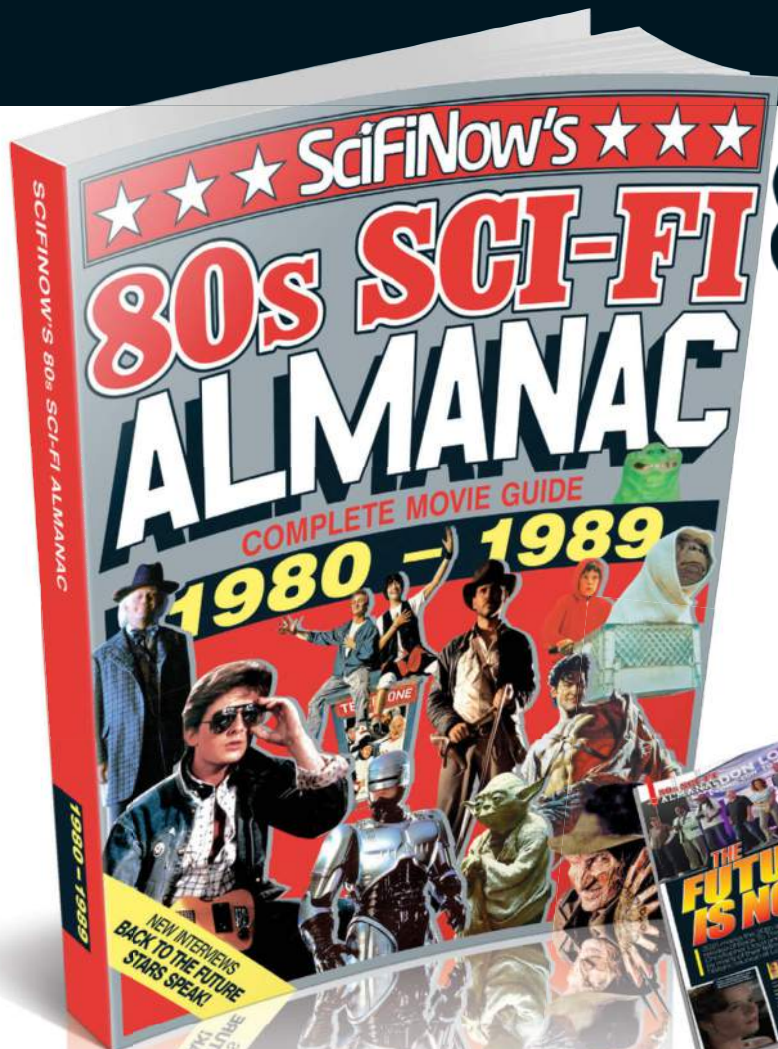
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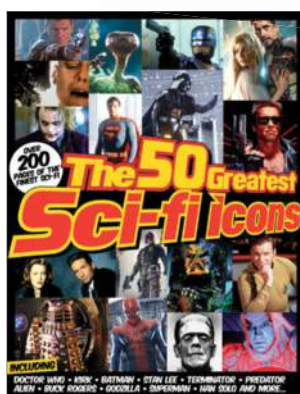


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